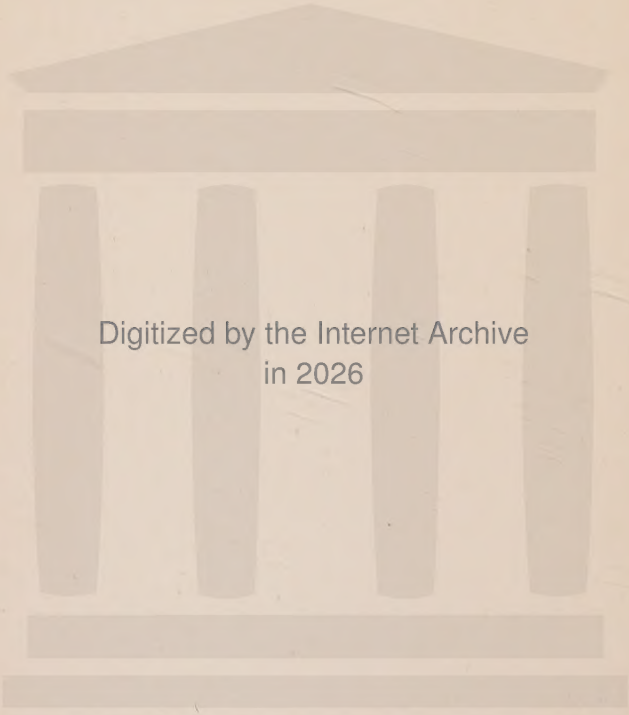
Discarded by
Dartmouth College Library

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN RUSSIA


Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

https://archive.org/details/selfgovernmentin0000paul

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN RUSSIA

BY

PAUL VINOGRADOFF, F.B.A.

CORPUS PROFESSOR OF JURISPRUDENCE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, SOMETIME PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MOSCOW

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE LIBRARY

LONDON
CONSTABLE AND COMPANY LIMITED
1915

Discarded by
Dartmouth College Library

352.047
V771S

145668

MAR 1 6 1918

Ger.

PLYMOUTH
COLLEGE
LIBRARY

PRINTED BY WM. BRENDON AND SON, LTD., PLYMOUTH, ENGLAND

THE little book which I submit to the public is mainly based on lectures delivered on various occasions during the war-year—the 1915 Henry Sidgwick lecture at Newnham College, Cambridge, an address to the Literary and Philosophical Society of Leicester, a lecture at Toynbee Hall, London. Lectures do not lend themselves to the detailed analysis of a subject, but they may gain in clearness what they lack in wealth of information. I venture, in any case, to address my readers as if they were members of a sympathetic audience.

OXFORD, *November*, 1915

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

OUTLINES OF RUSSIAN EVOLUTION 1

CHAPTER II

THE ORGANISATION OF SELF-GOVERNMENT . . . 31

CHAPTER III

POPULAR EDUCATION 71

CHAPTER IV

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE WAR 94

SELF-GOVERNMENT IN RUSSIA

CHAPTER I

OUTLINES OF RUSSIAN EVOLUTION

ENGLAND and Russia seem at first glance to stand at the opposite poles of European civilisation: the classical country of constitutionalism, the centre of industry, the great mart of sea intercourse on one side, and the Holy Russia of Tsardom, the home of agricultural peasantry, the vast background of Continental Europe on the other. And yet, for the unprejudiced observer the two countries possess many common traits: we may notice at the outset that the British are not only insular but cosmopolitan, and so are the Russians. The insularity of the Briton is not only the conscious reflex of a geographical situation, but the necessary outcome of a civilisation moulded within the compass of three seas. And yet the commercial and political intercourse with all the nations and

states of the earth has imparted to the British people interests and sympathies of a widely cosmopolitan character. In China and in Turkey, in Italy and in Greece, in Albania and in Serbia genuine Britishers have been intimately connected with the destinies of the people and keen to realise their aspirations. In Russia, again, although the nation is still struggling to emerge from its position in the background of Europe and although this situation in the rear has given a peculiar stamp to Russian character, people are alive almost to excess to the variety and the wealth of universal ideas. There is hardly any other community which gives so much time and energy to the study of foreign languages, foreign literature, foreign history. This similarity is far deeper than one might have supposed; the present crisis has brought home even to the man in the street the fact that there is a vast field for observation and enterprise in this mysterious country which used to be dismissed with a few superficial remarks borrowed from German sources.

In approaching the subject we must emancipate ourselves entirely from the official sequence of great events. It is not the history of ministers and generals, nor the tales of conquest and diplomacy, that will form the substance of my discourse. At

the back of all such pageants and events stands the living personality of the nation, and it is only facts relevant to the understanding of this personality, of its growth and education, that will have to be described and examined. They may, I hope, serve as an introduction to a very remarkable and powerful individuality which is not likely to be concealed much longer by the wall of German malevolence and obstruction.

The subject is so wide that we have from the outset to impose certain limitations to its treatment. Twentieth-century Russia has inherited intricate problems of great magnitude in many spheres of her activity. The acquisition of new territories and nationalities by Imperial conquest has proceeded more rapidly than the welding together of provinces and races into a coherent whole : to cite only one egregious instance, the condition of the Jews is an open sore and a scandal which requires immediate redress. The necessity of constitutional changes and of firm legality has been amply illustrated within the last decade by the conflicts of revolution and reaction. Again, in the field of religious life, the established Church, conscious and proud of the immense influence it has exerted over the course of Russian history, and armed with means of secular coercion, stands confronted by a growing

movement towards free conscience and free thought. If it were my task to present a kind of mosaic of present-day impressions it would be necessary to take account to some extent of all these heterogeneous and yet converging conflicts. But I prefer to follow a different plan. I want not to disperse but to concentrate your attention on one vital issue which, to my mind, is bound to react on everything else. If Russia succeeds in building up a strong and active system of self-government, a basis will be formed on which all other problems may be approached and solved. Subordinate nationalities will be able to preserve their individuality without losing touch with the Empire ; constitutional and legal progress will obtain a firm foundation in socia life ; religious freedom will be advanced and supported by the organic cohesion of local bodies. There may be differences of opinion as to the extent of such beneficial influences, but there can hardly be a doubt about the direction in which the principle of self-government will assert itself. This being so, it is a question of primary importance for all speculations as to the future of Russia, whether the actual facts of history and of present practice warrant the view that self-government is not only a desideratum of Russian life but a factor in being, the importance of which is growing apace. This is

the cardinal question to which my course is intended to provide an answer. Incidentally its treatment will give us opportunities to review various other aspects of Russian life, but the main thread of the discourse must not slip from our hands.

Before approaching the main subject of the discourse let us consider the turning points of the main current of Russian development during the modern era: such a preliminary sketch is necessary in order to assign to the facts their proper historical perspective. One more introductory remark has to be made: when I speak of the main current of Russian life I mean the evolution of the Russian nationality, comprising not only the Great Russians of old Muscovy and Siberia, but the Little Russians who joined them in the decisive struggle against the Poles and the White Russians reconquered from Lithuania in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The Ukraina movement of which there has been so much talk lately does not constitute for the great majority of Little Russians a motive of political cleavage, but an assertion of cultural peculiarities: they ought to have been freely conceded by the Government if it had been wiser, and they are bound to be recognised in a near future. Ukraina separatism does exist and has sometimes led to an

unnatural alliance between excited groups and Germany or Austria, but it would be preposterous to suppose that the people of Kiev or Kharkoff do not realise their fundamental affinity with the rest of their Great Russian kinsmen, and any policy constructed on such a surmise would prove as disastrous as the pact of Hetman Mazeppa with the Swedes. The Cossacks have shed their blood in innumerable Russian wars in a very different spirit from that which animates unfortunate Czech and Serb soldiers driven by Austria-Hungary. Variations of folk-lore and language do not alter the fact that the main current of modern Russian life embraces both Moscow and Kiev, as well as Petrograd, and that 110 of the 170 millions of Russian subjects are following its course.

We started by taking notice of certain analogies between the situation of Russia and that of Great Britain. Let us now take into account the fundamental difference between the two countries. Whereas the horizon of Great Britain opens freely in all directions, the Russian people have been, as it were, slowly revolving from East to West in order to reach an outlook free from obstruction.

This process of turning round began some three hundred years ago, and is not quite completed even now.

I am alluding, of course, to the powerful impetus imparted to Russian life by the conversion from Muscovite to European civilisation. It was drastically embodied in Peter the Great's well-known reforms, including, as they did, not only the organisation of an army drilled according to Western methods, the building of a sea-going fleet, the acquisition of the Baltic shores, the foundation of a new capital in close proximity to Sweden and to Germany, but also changes in the alphabet, the opening of various schools, the obligation for men of the privileged class to shave and to wear short, tight-fitting garments.

The age of Peter the Great forms undoubtedly a convenient landmark in popular history, but for students the transformation began earlier, and it was not only a secular and technical one, but a religious and cultural movement as well. It coincided with the accession of the Romanoff dynasty, which symbolises the national revival against Polish aggression and the reconstitution of a firm State after an "age of trouble." In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the nation was directing its energies towards the East and organising to meet the demands of the struggle against the Tartars on the Volga and in the Crimea; in the seventeenth the principal front was turned towards

the West, against the Swedes, and especially the Poles, who nearly strangled the Muscovite State in the opening years of the century and who were slowly and gradually driven back from Moscow, Smolensk and Kiev. In these terrible wars the practical needs of military organisation, technical skill and fiscal resources forcibly asserted themselves. Foreign soldiers, doctors, merchants and craftsmen were called up in ever-increasing numbers, chiefly Germans and Western Slavs, but also a good many English and Scots. Among the first commanders of troops drilled according to Western methods were e.g. Sir Arthur Aston, conspicuous later on in the army of Charles I, a Leslie, a Gordon, etc. The formation of " foreign " settlements like the famous German quarter in Moscow, still recognisable by the names of a street and the old Lutheran church built in 1654, may be regarded as the starting point of a rapidly increasing influx of men and ideas. The intercourse with the Poles and with the Greek East created two other channels of cultural permeation. The first conspicuous result of this process was the ecclesiastical reform carried out in the third quarter of the seventeenth century, a reform of which Patriarch Nikon was the most active promoter. Its aim was to bring the Russian Church into a closer connection with

the Eastern orthodoxy by removing various debased practices which had grown up in consequence of the political isolation and the insufficient culture of Muscovy. It was intended, among other things, to obtain a purified and more rational understanding of the Gospel and of Church service—a kind of Church Slavonic reformation adapted to the tastes and requirements of orthodox Muscovy. Revised versions of the Holy Books and of the various services were taken in hand with the help of learned monks from Mount Athos and from Kiev. The characteristic practice of a simultaneous reading of prayers crammed from consecutive stages of the Church service was abandoned, the preaching of sermons was revived, and many local customs which had arisen in the Russian Church were corrected in accordance with general Eastern traditions. This official rejuvenation of the Church provoked the stubborn opposition of the Old Ritualists, the *raskolniks*, blindly bigoted in their unreasoning clinging to errors sanctified by national usage, but grand in their spirit of independence, in their unconquerable protest against arbitrary ordinances in matters of creed. One of them, Priest Avvakum,[1] sat for years in a cell at Pustosersk in the far North and never ceased to reprove the Tsar for

[1] Habakkuk.

suffering the spread of new-fangled notions, to exhort the pilgrims flocking to him from all parts of Russia to stand firm in the old creed. When he was called up, in 1667, before a synod at which two dignitaries of the Eastern Church were present, they reproached him with his stubborn disobedience to the decrees of canonic authorities in the matter of making the sign of the cross with two fingers according to local Muscovite usage and not with three fingers, as the rest of the Christian world—the Greeks, the Romans, the Poles. He said: "Rome has fallen long ago and the Poles have perished with it, and even your orthodoxy is a very mixed one—you have grown weak through the violence of Turkish Mahomet, you had better come to us. By the grace of God we have preserved autocracy, and our orthodoxy was pure and free from vice up to the time of the apostate Nikon, and our Church is free of trouble." In his wonderful autobiography Avvakum summarised his position in the following words, worthy of a better cause: "I am not clever and not learned, but this I know, that all that has been transmitted to us by the Holy Fathers of the Church is holy and immaculate: I hold it till death as I have received it. I do not draw limits to the eternal: it has been laid down before us and so let it stand until the end of

centuries." No wonder the spirit of this and similar confessors commanded unbounded reverence among the simple people around. When Avvakum was overcome one day with pity for his wife and children who had to endure persecution and suffering for his sake, his wife said to him: "What are you talking, husband, go to church, confute the depravation of the heretics."

Against this unreasoning fidelity to national custom there reacted the consciousness of the wrongs and weaknesses entailed by ignorance and backward habits. This feeling was spreading more and more widely and some of the best men of the age were strongly affected by it. One among many, for instance, was the Chamberlain of Tsar Alexis, Rtistcheff, a man of singular charity and wisdom. The task of helping sufferers was for him not a matter of casual attention, but the constant preoccupation of his whole life. As an old man he set out with the army in a campaign against the Poles, and began his journey in a comfortable carriage, but soon had to continue on horseback, because he filled the carriage with sick and wounded. One of his preoccupations was to start a leading school in Moscow: he collected some thirty monks from Western Russia into the St. Andrew convent founded by him and succeeded in attracting pupils

from the city. He attended himself, as a pupil, classes of Greek, Latin and Church Slavonic.

This curious introduction to the modern history of Russia is not only significant of the profound religious background of Russian life; it also sets vividly before us the two groups into which the Russian nation is to some extent divided even now—the enlightened, rather materialistic State, together with the upper, highly educated classes on one hand—the great mass of the people, still clinging to ancient manners and customs on the other. Even in outward appearance one sees the two societies mixed and yet distinct in the streets of Moscow, Tula, Orel or any other Great Russian town—the men in Western attire—in bowlers and jackets that might have been made in Vienna, and the men in long garments and top-boots, reminding one of Eastern lands. The contrast goes, in truth, far deeper than outward appearance, and the extreme views of Old Ritualists make us realise the fact that the cleavage between East and West, between the upper classes brought up in European schools and the lower classes following Muscovite traditions, is not worn out even now, and has to be traced to this watershed of the seventeenth century. I remember a quaint sight illustrating that point. A good many

years ago a party of "intellectuals"—journalists and University men—of whom I was one, drove to a settlement of the Old Ritualists in the Rogojsky quarter of Moscow. We assisted at a service in front of Ikons dating from before Patriarch Nikon, and we listened to old-world litanies and prayers. When the service which took place in the middle of the church was over, we were conducted towards the inner chapel of the altar. It was closed and seals were affixed to the gates: they were seals of different public departments put on because the Government, though tolerating ordinary functions in the Church, did not allow the Old Ritualists to celebrate High Mass for fear of their making converts among the adherents of the established Church. Persecutions and annoyances of this kind have ceased now, but the recollection of them is still fresh and one cannot wonder at the fact that the Old Ritualists likened the seals of the Ministries to the seal of Antichrist described in the revelation of St. John.

The dualism of Russian life is a source of peculiar difficulties for the development of the country. It is not easy to combine the interests and views of the rich and of the poor in any community, but it is doubly difficult to assure mutual understanding and trust between sets which represent two different

kinds of civilisation. The people of Western education are striving hard to overcome this initial difficulty. The expression " to go among the people " has a special meaning in Russia—it points to the wish of making propaganda for advanced political and social ideas, but it may also indicate the striving towards a simpler life and a communion of aspirations in which the privileged class renounces its assumption of superior wisdom and higher culture. The evolution of Modern Russia is intimately connected with the gradual " solution " of these discords, the overcoming of this fundamental dualism of Russian life. It aims at the inclusion of Russian culture within the wider sphere of universal civilisation, while at the same time national originality should be preserved.

It cannot be denied that in its early stages the process of Western orientation was powerfully furthered by the policy of a strong centralistic government striving towards power, wealth, external efficiency. Peter the Great and Catherine the Great are prominent among the leaders of this compulsory enlightenment. They are both full-blooded representatives of providential absolutism and the civilisation which grew up under their guidance is characterised by a hard, aggressive spirit of technical, rationalistic utility.

Peter the Great may be regarded as the most famous exponent of the utilitarian theory of enlightenment through strong government. In his manifesto published in 1702 he sets forth how all his efforts and endeavours had been directed since his accession towards such a rule as would secure to all his subjects an increase in prosperity and welfare through the maintenance of peace and order at home, protection against foreign enemies and progress of trade. To improve the condition of the subjects in order and knowledge, and in view of the fact that they were not yet sufficiently versed in these matters, foreigners skilled in arts were invited from all lands for the better instruction of the army, the furtherance of commerce. They were promised complete freedom of conscience, all sorts of privileges and a special standing in law before courts empowered to decide cases in which such foreigners were concerned, not by Russian laws, but in accordance with Divine ordinances and the civil law of Rome. It must not be supposed that the official action of strong government led only to mechanical compulsion: society responded to it more and more, not only on account of external successes, but as a result of a gradual awakening to the value and beauty of knowledge. A characteristic example may be seen in the career of the spiritual founder of the Uni-

versity of Moscow, Lomonosoff, the son of a fisherman, born on the shore of the White Sea. His zeal for learning was kindled by his admiration for Peter's work. At the age of twenty he came to Moscow and spent five years in great poverty, while acquiring the rudiments of literary education. Eventually he went to Germany, where he studied philosophy and science under Wolf; he was kidnapped by the recruiting sergeants of the King of Prussia and pressed into a grenadier regiment, but succeeded in escaping and made his way back to Russia. He became a professor and a leading authority on physics, chemistry and metallurgy as well as on grammar, literature and history. He was, among other things, one of the first enthusiastic students of electrical phenomena and the manager of a school and workshop for mosaic art. The keynote of his restless activity is sounded in one of his odes in which he glorifies Peter the Great.

Addressing the pioneers of Russian intellectual progress he exclaimed: "You, whom the fatherland expects to arise from its own body and whom it wishes to equal men called up from foreign lands, be of good cheer! Show by your exertions that Russia is able to give birth to Platos of her own and to quick-witted Newtons."

Thus the successes achieved by the strong govern-

ment in the reigns of Peter, Catherine, Alexander, Nicholas I were not a mere display of external power. The nation did not only acquire a position of vantage in the world, but it asserted its national worth in many a desperate struggle and developed considerably on the lines of State organisation. The most curious point is, however, that although the light of universal civilisation was introduced for practical aims by the Government, its growth and diffusion became a force independent of governmental guidance and fetters. A momentous process of internal growth proceeded under the cover of these outward achievements; it began to manifest itself in a striking manner, directly after the titanic struggle with Napoleon, in the shape of a free and original literature: Pushkin, Kryloff, Gogol testify to that awakening, but perhaps the main expression of this process of ripening consciousness is the cultural harvest of the 'forties. It falls into an age when the Nicholas *régime* exerted the most uncompromising censorship on independent thought, when Kireyevsky's moderate reflections were prohibited, Shevtchenko was exiled to a far-off fortress in the East for singing of Cossack valour and turbulence, and Herzen had to fly over the border on account of his radicalism. And yet the intellectual tendencies and forces were

being accumulated by the best men of the time—chiefly around the Universities, but also in all other centres of education and learning, in the ecclesiastical seminaries, as well as in military schools. The leading feature of this great revival is its philosophical and humanistic character. The followers of Peter the Great were striving to acquire knowledge for the sake of technical skill, the contemporaries of Catherine II were confident that encyclopædic rationalism has the power to solve all problems by the help of scientific methods, the idealists of the 'forties sought regeneration and progress in raising many-sided philosophic speculation as an appeal to the dignity and inner freedom of man. The discovery of the charmed, unconquerable world of human ideals right amidst the officialdom and the crude violence of the surrounding *régime* inspired this generation of the 'forties with unbounded enthusiasm and a sensitiveness in regard to all manifestations of independent thought and artistic beauty, which has never been rivalled either in Russia or in any other country. A figure like that of Granovsky, professor of history in the University of Moscow, was the very embodiment of Western enlightenment and humanitarian liberalism: he could not come forward with a direct criticism of official rule, and his lectures on mediæval

Europe, or on the connection between geographical and political factors in history, were straightforward and scientific, and never meant to serve as a screen for allusions to modern misdoings. But his pupils and educated society at large listened to every word of his with rapt attention because it opened before them a vista of noble, disinterested, free thought: it was like a breath of fresh air penetrating into the stifling atmosphere of servility and superstition. However, it is not necessary for me to dwell long on the ideas propagated by "Westerners" like Granovsky, Herzen, Bielinsky. They were the familiar ideas of European liberalism and radicalism, though endowed with particular vitality and freshness. It is more significant to notice the trend of thought of another intellectual set of the 'forties and 'fifties, namely, the teaching of so-called Slavophiles, representing the other aspect of Russian dualism. These men had also been taught at the Universities and had reflected on philosophical and religious problems; they were far away from the unreasoning stubbornness of the Old Ritualists; but, like the latter, they clung to the belief in the peculiar genius of the Russian people and sought salvation not in a repetition of Western methods, but in an original contribution to the general history of culture.

Kireyevsky, Khomiakoff, Aksakoff formulated various aspects of this view. I should like to call your attention to one of them, to Constantine Aksakoff on account of the importance of his historical doctrine. Constantine was a dreamer, entirely unfit for any other life but that of study. He never married, never took up any external career, lived till he was forty years of age as an inmate of his father's house, and broke down at once when his father died. It was a touching story and an exceptional one—this pining away of a man who had been conspicuous for his high spirits, as well as for his physical strength. Something of the same fanatical earnestness pervades Constantine's literary activity: he does not see many things, he does not understand mean terms and compromises, he just goes with his whole heart into the few objects of his pursuits—a child and a giant at the same time. His main idea was, that instead of looking down upon the common people we have to learn from them. It is worked out in a rather amusing way in a comedy entitled "Prince Lupovitsky." The hero is discovered engaged in conversation with friends in a Paris restaurant. He tells them of his wish to go to Russia and do something for civilising his peasants. One of his companions, Count Dolinsky, finds the notion ridiculous.

"Our peasants—are they men? Do you know what their destination is? They exist in order that we, the educated people, may enjoy all the pleasures of civilisation—*c'est le mot.* That I, for instance, may live in Paris and dine at the Café de Paris. *Ils ne sont bons qu'à ça et c'est encore trop d'honneur pour eux.*"—The other friend, Baron Salutin, explains that if Lupovitsky will insist upon his whim, then he ought to make up his mind to drive the peasantry into civilisation by sheer force: "you want an iron hand; *une main de fer.* Make them into paste and then knead it as you like. *C'est ainsi que Pierre le Grand a agi envers nous.*" Lupovitsky is of gentler temper and tries persuasion and instruction, when he returns to his native country-seat and meets his subjects. He begins by making a speech about his sentiments and plans, and then calls up the village elder, the starosta, to instruct him about the duties of man. The noble philanthropist tells the starosta that he will buy books for the instruction of the people.—S. What books, sir?—L. There are many books written to suit simple minds. They treat of subjects which are necessary to the peasant, for instance, what is an ox?—S. An ox?—L. Yes, an ox. I hope an ox is very important in your life.—S. But, sir, we know about it. How should one not know what one

is tending all through life.—L. It is not only about oxen, but also about moral duties, that people ought not to lie, to get drunk.—S. Everybody knows so much, sir, only people do not act up to it.—L. Yes, but still it won't be amiss to read.—S. No, it won't be amiss to read, but it has been written so well in old books. There are books about it.—L. What books do you mean?—S. The Holy Books, sir. Please buy them, sir. There is much in the same strain and the conversation ends by the conversion of the nobleman. He is especially impressed by the common sense and the high moral standard of the Mir, the Village Community, and winds up by saying: "I shall leave with the greatest respect for the peasant. *Je vous estime, Monsieur le peuple.*"

The main tendency of Constantine Aksakoff's writings is well rendered by this caricature. He never aimed at artistic perfection. Everything had to serve his political philosophy. He praised some of Turgeneff's novels from this point of view, but he was very bitter in his appreciation of a contemporary lyric poet. "What is the use of always singing out, love, love, love, dear, dear, dear?"

Constantine Aksakoff's chief desire was to give a new explanation of Russian history and Russian ideals. He looks for stray bits of intelligence

likely to prove that the people were organised into democratic communities and well capable of having their say in public affairs.

But he repudiated all wish to set up a republican theory. He does not even want to be a liberal in the European sense of the word; he hates all such Western party cries. In regard to Russia he discovers a curious duality of principles—on one side is the land, on the other the State. The land consists of communities and is a community of the folk by itself, but it does not concern itself with questions of power. Everything that has to do with law, coercion, external power has been handed over to the State, and in such questions the land has only a consultative voice. Aksakoff thinks, that the voluntary subjection to the State is a distinctive feature of Russian history. Instead of beginning with a conquest, it begins with the calling in of Norman chiefs by the Russian tribes. The moral unity of the people exists quite apart from any power of the sword—it depends on conviction and the feeling of brotherhood. But the world is not satisfied with such unity—it is a world of strife, and therefore external order must intervene to make the unity complete: external order, with its State direction, its prisons and soldiers. The Russian people is in favour of the moral unity and does not make much

of legal formalities. This is why it puts up with a political organisation concentrated round the Tsar. The simpler, the more straightforward the fabric of State authority, the better it is. There is nothing in Russian history savouring of an attempt of the people to get hold of politics, to transact State affairs directly by its own hands. Let us notice in passing that Aksakoff was not quite a dreamer in this respect. Notwithstanding all the attempts of centralising bureaucracy, there was still a good deal of self-government going on in Russia—every village community was a little world by itself for the management of its affairs, although subjected to the squire and to the Imperial officials. And in every province the landed gentry still formed a kind of corporation with a considerable class feeling and important rights and duties in local government. The Central power was doing its best to curtail all these independent elements, and men of Aksakoff's stamp were picturing to themselves an ideal state of things, when each of the two agents would have its free play and both would live together in harmony.

It is strange, however, that Aksakoff should not have realised the serious antagonism between his plans and the existing form of government in Russia, or rather that he did not quite make up his

mind about settling contradictions in some definite way. We find him at one and the same time an enthusiastic admirer of the absolute Tsar, as a representative of national greatness and strength, and a staunch enemy of Petersburg policy, that is of centralising bureaucracy.

He will not hear of a constitution—this is just one of those miserable Western contract-notions which have become so important in the history of Europe, because they proceed from conquest and from party-strife.

The Russian people has never been divided into conquerors and conquered—let it not be divided into political parties.

" There are some who would tell us the people or the government may break their pledges: guarantees are needed. No guarantees! Guarantees are evil. Where they are needed, there is no good—it is better that life in which there is no good may be destroyed, than that it should exist through evil."

Russian political life is based on the implicit confidence of the people in their ruler, and it must be added that the sentiment was for a long time returned by the ruler in regard to the people. The relations between the Tsar and his council, his Duma, are very characteristic of this point.

But if it had been so in the past, one could not say

that it was so in the present. The power of the Tsar stood firm and uncontested as before, but the institutions representing the free advice of the nations had disappeared. Aksakoff could not but deplore the want of confidence which had done away with the Duma and the Sobor. Altogether he was no friend of the new practices in the administration, and saw no reason whatever for its greed of power and the distrust of all local and individual originality which inspired the government of his time. Such persecution of one element of the people by another was, in his view, quite against the old Muscovite traditions. He had a ready explanation for the mischief : it was the plain outcome of the unhappy connection with the West. It is for the sake of such flimsy pageants in the Western style that the government has been seduced to forsake national tradition. Peter the Great is answerable for the misdeed. He inaugurated the unhappy Petersburg period of Russian history. Constantine Aksakoff has expressed his feelings in regard to Peter in some verses which, though not distinguished by great poetical merit, are very characteristic of his views.

" A man of genius and of blood-stained fame, you stand far off on the border in the halo of terrible glory and armed with your axe. In the name of

usefulness and science you have often dyed your hands in the blood of your people, and your swift thought told you that the seed of knowledge would quickly grow when watered with blood.—But wait ! The spirit of the people has drawn back in the time of trouble, but it keeps its eternal right. It is waiting for the hour when a national voice will again call forth the waves of the people.—You have despised all Russian life, and in return a curse lies on your great work. . . . You have discarded Moscow, and far from the people you have built a solitary city which bears your name in a foreign tongue. And this city feasting by the sea has exhausted the life of the nation. But your feat is a wrong, and the nation will rise again some day for ancient Moscow. Then it will pardon you."

You see that although Aksakoff did not want in the least to preach liberalism in the Western sense of the word, still his appeal to the traditions of Old Russian life was conceived in direct opposition to the policy of the government. Absolutism as a centralised rule of the policy of supervision was in his view quite as Western as constitutionalism. The ideal of mutual goodwill and confidence he sought in the Muscovite period, and as his resentment of present wrongs concentrated into a plain and clear historical protest against Peter's reform, so his hope

of future revival was bound up with the thought that Moscow would take the place of St. Petersburg.

The next stage was reached when the idealists and dreamers had to be summoned and to correct the work of the official leaders, of the generals and privy councillors whose bankruptcy was proclaimed by the Crimean war. The marvellous feature of the situation in the 'sixties was not that the government of Alexander II had to submit to criticism and reform, but that it found ready to take charge of practical politics so many men who were able to cope with the immense difficulties of the many tasks imposed upon them. The value of university education asserted itself brilliantly by the side of the traditional training in administration which the gentry had acquired in the course of Imperial history.

A society sedulously kept under tutelage by Nicholas I proved capable in the 'sixties of carrying out stupendous and lasting reforms. It is sufficiently known how the liberal movement of the 'sixties gave place to the embittered revolutionary propaganda of the 'seventies. Not that this propaganda embraced and concentrated all the aspirations of the men of Western persuasion in Russia: the majority of them harboured ideas of moderate constitutionalism and of democratic evolution. But

moderate parties are never successful in the beginning of a great crisis. Their turn comes when the extreme votaries of contending parties have sufficiently maltreated and exhausted each other, and some compromise has to be arranged as the outcome of the struggle. It would be out of the question to rehearse the striking events of recent years—the reaction under Alexander III, its breakdown in the Japanese war, the rush for liberties in the fateful years 1905 and 1906, the renewed attempts at strong government and the advent of the present crisis. What I want to emphasise, in conclusion, is the fact that the present situation is in no way an accidental one. It has been produced and prepared by the whole course of Russian culture and politics. The two great currents of Russian life have met again, but this time they act in conjunction to ward off the traditional enemy of the race, the hostile power which is seeking to imprison the nation for ever in a back room of Europe in order to exploit it at leisure for its own economic and political ends. This is impossible and will not be. But it is to be hoped that the union of the two currents will achieve more than the repulse of the enemy at the border, that it will be strong enough to initiate a new creative period of Russian evolution, free from the limitations of Oriental lethargy and at the same

time true to the cast of originality impressed by history on the Russian mind.

However, it is the great creative movement of the 'sixties which dominates the second half of the nineteenth century in Russia, and in order to estimate its real worth let us examine somewhat more closely one of its most momentous sides—the organisation of Self-government.

CHAPTER II

THE ORGANISATION OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

THE growth of Russian society as a body distinct from the State is best illustrated by the stages in the formation of self-government. It is impossible to separate neatly and completely the affairs of central and local administration, the machinery of the State and the organisation of social forces concerned with political problems. But in describing the structure of a nation it is possible and desirable to mark contrasts rather sharply and to avoid the confusion and compromises which exist in reality.

We need not go back to origins in our survey. Let us look at the social organisation of Muscovy in the sixteenth century, when the grand dukes had "collected" the scattered principalities of Great Russia, shaken off the yoke of the Volga Khans and assumed the title of Tsars in token of their full and independent sovereignty. The situation was governed by the constant struggle of this new power against the incursions of the Tartars over

the southern steppes and the wars with Poland and Sweden in the west. Muscovy was like a besieged fortress slowly extending the circuit of its walls and forts, gaining ground against the horsemen of the steppe or stemming their terrible invasions, with a garrison harassed and decimated by ceaseless campaigns, and yet advancing on the whole like a slowly rising tide. In order to stand that sort of life the whole population had to be registered and called up for compulsory service, some in the "regiments" on the frontiers, some for siege defence in the supporting towns, the majority in the fields for the purpose of providing the armies and the administration with the necessaries of life.

The landed gentry in its hierarchical order was the mainstay of that organisation. It formed the class of "serving men" proper, and was distributed over the land on regimental and garrison duties under the liability of being called up to mobilise and to meet eventual attacks on various fronts. Every knight of this array came up for active service with a retinue of esquires and foot followers according to a settled scheme and in proportion to the amount of landed estate of which he was enfeoffed in military tenure. The numbers of these unwieldy hosts were large, and testified to the importance attached to this primary duty of "serving" the

Tsar and the country. A trustworthy chronicle tells us that in 1581, when the Hungarian king of Poland, Stephen Batory, laid siege to Pskov, that city was held by a garrison of 30,000 men, while Novgorod was occupied by another army of 40,000, and Tsar John the Terrible himself advanced to Staritsa with a host of 300,000 men of all grades. This was an exceptional effort, but the incursions of the Crimean Tartars, though they led to smaller mobilisations, were not less troublesome, as they recurred from year to year. Behind the serving class stood the " chargeable " population that had to get somehow through the economic pursuits of settled existence : it was heavily assessed in various ways and in most cases assigned to the landed serving men for the payment of certain dues and rents, besides bearing the charge of the various State taxes and rates. The secular clergy and the monasteries were supported in a similar way by chargeable groups, and it was only in the towns and in the north-east in the provinces facing the White Sea and the Ural Mountains that a stock of chargeable men independent of superior " serving " gentry still formed a prominent part of the population. The whole situation was not unlike the state of things which obtained in England under Athelstan or Canute, when the pressure of the Danish

invasions called forth an immense burden of services and of Danegeld taxation.

Now in the sixteenth century the various classes of the Muscovite people had not only to fight the enemy and to till the land, but also to perform various administrative functions. In the earlier centuries the princes and their lieutenants, who ruled the land by the help of military followings, exacted from their territories produce in kind, money rents or fines, but did not trouble particularly about the details of justice and police, leaving these very much to the management of local hundred ealdors and tithing men, or, as regards procedure, to the judicial struggle between the parties. The functions of government, as far as exercised by the "lieutenants" of the princes and grand dukes, gave rise to "provender" for these functionaries—this was the chief aim of administration, while popular welfare and justice came in only for subsidiary consideration. When exactions became intolerable, complaints were made in Moscow, and there ensued trials similar to the Roman actions against governors "de pecuniis repetundis."

The establishment of the Tsars in the sixteenth century led to a more systematic treatment of the problem and to a better understanding of the intimate connection between the interests of the people

on one hand, and the rights and duties of government on the other. The constructive period marked by the publication of the two Codes of 1497 and 1550, and by the policy of John the Terrible, present an interesting attempt at a settlement of administrative problems. The " provender " system was given up: that meant that the Moscow government ceased to regard the office of a provincial lieutenant as a kind of estate, from which he was to draw income on the condition of providing certain supplies for the central authority and performing in a perfunctory manner certain functions of *haute justice* or police. It took up the point of view that the local administration of law and order in the provinces concerned the State, which ought to assume direct control over it.

This control, however, was not exercised by means of hierarchical centralisation. On the contrary, the various local groups were called upon to act on their own accord for the purpose of solving the different problems at hand. The landed gentry, for one, had to meet in the garrison centres and to elect assessment officers and town commanders, who had not only to arrange the repartition of service between the members of the corporation, but to watch over their economic interests, to provide guardians for minors, to approach the

Moscow authorities with complaints and petitions, etc. Thus the serving gentry of each province was consolidated into a kind of county corporation, the members of which were bound to stand pledge for each other in the performance of their duties and to provide security for the good behaviour and efficiency of their elective officers. Another set of groups was formed for the pursuit and extermination of highwaymen and burglars—the district was called guba, a term derived from the putting to death of habitual criminals. The elder of this police district was elected by an assembly drawn from all classes of the population—the "chargeable" men and the clergy taking part in the election by the side of the gentry. Thirdly, the legal procedure under the new Codes was generally remodelled by the introduction of jurors or sworn assessors, who had to watch over the proper conduct of trials and to protect the parties against arbitrary decisions of the magistrates. Fourthly, in fiscal administration we find two sets of officers elected by the local districts, hundred ealdors and tithing men, who had to collect direct taxes and dues, and sworn collectors in charge of custom duties, public-house payments and the like. As you see, the life of the Muscovite population in the sixteenth century was supervised by a network of heterogeneous

offices to which must be added the parishes and other ecclesiastical districts. One common feature of these institutions was their tendency to make use of local grouping and of elective machinery in order to carry on political functions of the State: the concerns of the communities themselves were left to a great extent to take care of themselves. Undoubtedly, even such parasitical treatment of the local groups by the State had some bearing on the growth of autonomous local and provincial bodies, and we find that, especially in the beginning, towns and districts are keen to obtain grants of electoral franchises. But the working of the administrative network was soon felt to be rather a burden than a privilege. It entailed a tremendous amount of compulsory drudgery on the part of elective officers, who received no regular pay and suffered greatly in the management of their private affairs. In difficult times and in exposed places the duties became very irksome and were seldom transacted with honesty and efficiency. It is not rare to find that localities petition for a return to the *régime* of appointed lieutenants.

This state of affairs explains why in the seventeenth century, during the troubles which followed the extinction of the direct descendants of Rurik, and in the course of the reconstruction of the State

under the early Romanoffs, the elective system breaks down and gives way to centralised administration by commanders under the supervision of departments established in Moscow. And yet the element of local self-government lingered tenaciously in the household affairs of the social classes. The landed gentry formed cohesive groups according to regimental and garrison centres, and as for the peasantry, while it lapsed more and more into a servile dependence upon the landlords, its village communities became more and more consolidated into bodies responsible for taxes and labour services to the State as well as to the squires, and exercising control over the distribution and cultivation of the soil. This undercurrent of economic life explains why local self-government, which to all appearance was dead in the seventeenth century, reappears again on familiar lines in the reign of Peter the Great. In his prodigious efforts to turn the current of Russian development he came to feel keenly the need of an administrative reform. There is a story how after a banquet Prince James Dolgoruky, one of the most trusty and courageous of Peter's satellites, reproached the Tsar with having striven merely after military glory and with having done very little for legislation. The taunt is said to have been keenly felt by Peter. In any case, the last

years of his reign were devoted mainly to experiments in administrative changes. Swedish and German practices were borrowed wholesale and a number of boards and offices were created and remanipulated again and again. It would be confusing and unprofitable to trace the details and fluctuations of the provincial reforms of 1699, 1708 and 1719, but a few main points which have stood the test of time must be mentioned. The governors became prefects with widely extended powers derived from their position as the representatives of the central authority. It is curious to note that Peter himself tried hard to make the governor a *primus inter pares*, but the natural evolution of affairs was stronger than his mighty will. The attempt to introduce collegiate institutions in fiscal and in judicial administration was not wholly lost to the future, however, and we find such colleges right down to our own time, in the shape of boards, watching over the legality and general policy of the provincial bureaucrats. Yet another characteristic trait of Peter's organisation is the consciousness that the economic welfare of the people is necessary for the might of the State, and that economic progress must be produced by the efforts of the population and not only by order of the rulers. Hence attempts to create and encourage local self-government. In

the country the squires were called together to help and to control the military administration of the districts, and committees were formed by the gentry to take care of financial matters. As a parallel to this arrangement in the country, the towns were granted municipal government, entrusted to the well-to-do merchant class, the so-called first guild. These experiments did not come off very well because of the lack of suitable men and of proper training, but their tendency is full of meaning. We find a traditional alliance between autocracy and the class of the squires, from which military and civil officers were drawn, and we notice the timid beginnings of municipal life. These facts are important because they help us to understand the evolutionary character of Peter's reform, which for the superficial observer seems a violent and miraculous cataclysm. They also help to bridge the gap between Muscovite organisation and the reformed Russia of Peter and Catherine, and, as we shall see, the Russia of our own times.

The principal fact to be noticed during the reigns of the immediate successors of Peter is that the military cohesion and discipline imposed on the gentry gradually relaxed. This was produced not only by the natural reaction against the tremendous strain of the reform period, but also by the develop-

ment of material resources and business tendencies. The landowning officers' class began to turn its attention more and more to the cultivation of its estates, and it grew tired of the constant service and drill which had formed its chief occupation for centuries.

In the reigns of the Empresses Anna and Elizabeth the burdens placed on the squires were lightened and their privileges accentuated. Peter III, the half-witted husband of Catherine II, proclaimed in 1762 that "gentlemen" were free to serve the State or not to serve, according to their wishes. This Ukase marks the transition from the status of the gentry, as an order of hereditary officers endowed with land, to that of a class of privileged landowners on whose support the Empire depended indirectly, but whose chief occupations were not military but economic. The possibility of such a change of attitude testified to a very important result: the leading groups of the nation began to acquire a capacity for independent existence and independent pursuits which they were unable to manifest during the desperate struggles of the preceding centuries. The squires did not cease to send their sons to the army or to the civil service, but they were not legally bound to do so or to keep them in service from the age of 15 to that of 60.

The management of estates became their chief interest, the estate itself ceased to be a conditional fee and was considered full property, while its cultivators lapsed from the standing of citizens attached to the soil under the sway of an officer, to that of villains belonging to a master.

Catherine II's legislation drew the consequences from the new situation. In 1775 the gentry was definitely organised for the purpose of provincial government, and in 1785 it was formed into a close hereditary order and endowed with corporative rights. These measures present two aspects of the same situation and may be treated together. Provincial government was reorganised on the principle of the joint action of Crown officials and of elected representatives of the population. Provinces and districts were formed on lines which have more or less endured up to now: the province was assigned a territory with approximately 300–400,000 heads of population, and the district (uyezd) one with 30,000. Governors remained at the heads of provinces and captains (ispravniks) exercised similar functions in a greatly limited manner in the district. Judicial authority was separated from administration and from fiscal affairs. The main point was that in all the tribunals and collegiate institutions assessors elected by the

gentry and, in the lower instances, also by merchants or craft guilds and by the free peasantry, were called upon to play a prominent part. The gentry in particular was organised in corporations according to provinces. Its members met once in three years to elect marshals and the assessors of different courts, to administer the finances of the corporation, to audit accounts, to receive reports, to draw up petitions and statements of claims, etc. The arrangement corresponded to a theory borrowed from Montesquieu's " Esprit des Lois," of which Catherine was a great admirer: it was thought to embody the *pouvoir intermédiaire* of a truly monarchical government. The rule of the landed aristocracy was supposed to ensure legality, order and public spirit. It was to be supplemented by a high standard of honour and full legal protection against arbitrary acts. According to the Charter of 1785, a " gentleman " could not be deprived of any personal rights unless by judgment in a court where his peers were assessors. Thus the legislation of Catherine undoubtedly reflects rays falling from Western sources of light. This reform had a considerable amount of success: it was put into practice on a soil well prepared for the rule of a squirearchy by previous history. The provincial corporations of the gentry became influential and

active bodies; the marshals and other delegates exercised a great deal of authority, and their posts were coveted by ambitious members of county society.

There were shady sides, however, to this aristocratic *régime*. It was a class rule and exhibited all the defects of class rule: jobbery, corruption, arrogance, petty quarrels, narrow selfishness. An amusing picture of the world of employees in a small provincial centre stirred up by the supposed arrival of a revising officer from St. Petersburg is presented by Gogol in his comedy "The Reviser." It is a caricature, but a brilliant one: it hits off in a humorous manner the weaknesses of the original. The scene is laid in a town of Nicholas I's time—sometime about 1830, but it is characteristic of a life which sprang up under the operation of Catherine's legislation. A yet more significant and obnoxious feature of the system consisted in the debasement of the peasantry. In spite of their surrender to the exploitation of the military class in the seventeenth century, the peasants never ceased to consider themselves free citizens of the State, subject to landlords because the landlords were subject to military burdens. Pososhkov, a contemporary of Peter the Great, expressed this view in emphatic

words : " The peasants do not in truth belong to the squires, they are temporarily entrusted to their rule, their only master is the Tsar." When eighteenth-century legislation relaxed the hold of the State over the squires, when Peter III proclaimed the " freedom " of the gentry from compulsory service, the peasants began to entertain the hope that their own bondage would be correspondingly dissolved. This called forth one rising after the other, and, in spite of cruel disappointments, the accession of every new emperor was greeted by the revival of such hopes. In reality, however, the economic turn imparted to the class of the squires in the course of the eighteenth century led to the enslaving of the peasant, to the obliteration of the public law features which had characterised the older arrangement. Though Catherine II was a disciple of French philosophers and loved to speculate on liberal and humanitarian theories, her government did not carry out any of the noble ideas of emancipation in which she occasionally indulged in her writings. On the contrary, the lot of the " serfs " became more and more gloomy, more and more similar to the condition of domesticated animals. In this way the class self-government instituted to supplement and to support official bureaucracy was made to rest heavily on a founda-

tion of serfdom. Here again you may turn for an illustration of the social results to a masterpiece of Gogol, to his novel "Dead Souls"; it describes the journey across Russia of an adventurer who has hit on the expedient of building up a fictitious "fortune in souls," that is in serfs, by concluding agreements with squires as to the purchase of their dead dependents. This original device gives the great humorist an opportunity for passing in review all sorts of quaint types of Russian country society. As for the tragic aspect of the situation, Turgeneff's Tales of a sportsman give a better insight than any dry statements of fact. The books referred to belong to a later age, but the laws of serfdom of which they treat, in spite of some legislative "nibbling," were not materially different at the end of the eighteenth century and towards the middle of the nineteenth.

And yet great changes were slowly preparing behind the scenes. To begin with, the very transformation of the military order into planters testified to the dependence of the whole arrangement on economic evolution. And that process of economic evolution was rapidly reaching a stage in which serf labour was becoming unproductive and unsuitable to the requirements of the market. In the old days natural husbandry settlements in

the centre and an extension of aristocratic protection and capital to the colonisation fringe were the main features of the Russian agricultural system. In the course of the nineteenth century new factors developed with increasing force: industry and commerce were making progress and creating new centres of attraction for labour and new markets for produce. When the railways came in, the tendency towards mobilisation acquired an irresistible impetus, but even before that time the framework of municipal institutions provided by Catherine II's Town Charter of 1785 began gradually to fill up with social groups of merchants, clerks, craftsmen and workmen, which in former centuries had represented almost negligible quantities. In the rural districts themselves the black-soil regions of the south and south-east stood in want of hired labour, while the congested districts in the centre and in the north spent their working strength in an unproductive routine fostered by artificial settlement restrictions.

That means that the plantation system had not even the excuse of conformity to geographical conditions. As a matter of fact, already in the period of serfdom the working population began to be exploited more and more by means of cash rents (obrok) instead of labour services (barstchina). Thus even apart from humanitarian tendencies economic changes

threatened the institution of serfdom at a time when it seemed to have reached its most complete manifestation. One of the influential members of Nicholas I's committees dealing with the problem of serfdom, Admiral Mordvinoff, maintained that serfdom was a product of economic evolution and would disappear of itself when its economic premises had been removed : this argument cut both ways : having been formulated for the retention of serfdom it was used, later on, for its abolition. Yet it is very doubtful whether any amount of economic reasoning would have overcome the resistance of the vested interests rooted in villainage : these interests were too numerous and too powerfully represented in the summit of the State. Emancipation was eventually brought about by the combined pressure of material facts and of the irresistible movement of public opinion on humanitarian grounds. Political idealism played a most conspicuous part in the process. It inspired bitter criticism and acts of renunciation like those of the Grand Duchess Helene Paulovna, Tsar Nicholas' sister-in-law, to whom belongs the glory of opening the career of emancipation by liberating the serfs of her estate of Karlovka. The important point is that civilised society in Russia became gradually permeated by the con-

viction that serfdom was not only iniquitous but dangerous, that it sapped the strength of the nation and prevented its normal growth. The pioneers in the campaign against serfdom were not only professors and men of letters, but also country gentlemen who had brought back from the Universities an untiring zeal for freedom and progress. In these circles the study of Western history and culture formed a powerful ferment for comparison and for the framing of ideals. It is significant that according to J. Aksakoff's testimony it was not by the Slavophiles but by "Western" liberals that the first plans for effecting the emancipation of the peasants with their land allotments were elaborated. The abolitionist movement found efficient supporters in the ranks of Government officials.

General Rostovtseff, the first president of the "Committee of Redaction" which drafted the emancipation statute—an excitable and well-meaning man—gave invaluable help by interpreting the trend of public opinion to the Tsar. Nicholas Milutine, Assistant Minister of the Interior under Alexander II, was its most energetic and successful promoter in the memorable years 1859–1861. Men of such enlightened opinions were not in the majority in the upper classes of society even in those eventful years. Sinister selfishness did

assert itself in many ways and hampered very materially the work of emancipation. But the history of the years after the Crimean war presents a remarkable illustration of the explosive force of ideas. The opponents of the contemplated reforms were unable to come out into the open and to challenge their aggressors frankly and boldly : they had to seek advantages on side issues and to yield on questions of principle. In these circumstances the political consciousness of the State as embodied in Emperor Alexander II and in the President of the Grand Committee, Grand Duke Constantine Nikolayevitch, gave its casting vote against the planters and carried the emancipation of 23 millions of serfs, one-third of the population of Russia.

The above remarks on the emancipation of the serfs are not a digression from our main subject, as might seem at first glance. They are the necessary introduction to an account of the reform of provincial government which took place in 1864. It did not require great acumen to perceive that when the peasants were set free and a basis for rural economy was sought in free agreement instead of compulsory service, the position of the landed gentry had to be resettled in every respect and the new citizens had to be provided with a machinery of public government instead of the class rule of

the ancient *régime*. The realisation of this truth is expressed on some occasions before emancipation. This was done in a remarkable manner in a scheme of reform elaborated in view of the emancipation by the Committee of the province of Tver and presented in Petersburg by the marshal of the gentry, A. M. Unkovsky, and other delegates. They called attention to the fact that the social *régime* based on serfdom, though absolutely wrong, contained some positive traits : it enabled the squires to assist the Government in the performance of its political duties and it operated as a check on the arbitrary methods of Crown officials—the tchinovniks. Once this check was removed, there would be imminent danger that the people would fall into subjection to bureaucracy instead of being subjected to its former masters—the landlords. One could not expect the Crown officials to abstain from oppression, corruption and arbitrary violence, because the whole fabric of society had been vitiated by the spirit and habits of serfdom. An efficient antidote could truly be found in *self-government*, and the Tver Committee sketched progressive plans of reform, drawing its chief arguments from the history and the political science of Western Europe, which, to their minds, had conclusively proved that historical evolution leads everywhere towards the

gradual ascent of lower classes and the abolition of privileges. Nevertheless the Committee found it necessary to pave the way towards democratic self-government in which all classes should take equal shares, by a preliminary stage characterised by a preponderance of the aristocratic element. In a less finished and less theoretical form, the conviction that emancipation was the first step towards a series of other changes, was widely prevalent in society. Rostovtseff, the president of the first central committee for drafting the plan of emancipation, wrote to the Emperor on October 23, 1859: "Right through the various statements of the delegates runs one idea shared by all, namely, the condemnation of the unfortunate arrangement of local government and of the courts and their activity—arbitrary, encroaching, secret and secure against discovery. All are convinced that under such an arrangement of the judiciary and police neither the welfare of the landowners nor that of the peasants can be ensured and safeguarded."

In fact, the beginning of local government reform had to be made in connection with the very statute of emancipation, because an administrative machinery had to be set up to replace the authority of the lords abolished by the statute.

Certain principles were laid down in this respect in 1861 and developed in detail in 1866. The main point was the organisation of the civil parish (volost) for administrative and judiciary purposes. This unit was not a new one: it had existed all through ancient Russia at a time when the free peasantry had not yet been subjected to secular and ecclesiastical lords. It lingered on in the North and East, where the black, i.e. the free, population had kept its ground. It was resorted to on the domains of the Imperial family and of the State in the reigns of Paul and of Nicholas I.

In the 'sixties the civil parish, consisting of several neighbouring villages with a normal area formed by a radius of some 9 miles and a population ranging from some 700 to 5000, was used as the pivot of local administration in rural districts.

1. Its institutions were: (i) an assembly of representatives of the component villages for the principal purpose of electing the officers of the volost; (ii) an executive consisting of a volost elder, assessors and a parish clerk; and (iii) a court with elective judges. These are the three parts of the volost machinery. There was a good deal of election, as you see, and those who framed the arrangement meant it undoubtedly to form the basis of popular self-government. It was, however, vitiated by

substantial drawbacks which made themselves felt from the very beginning. The organisation came into being as an institution devised for a particular class and designed to keep up the isolation of the latter from the rest of the people. The civil parish is exclusively composed of members belonging to the peasant order or of persons of other orders who have joined the volost under special conditions : the gentry, the clergy, merchants, members of liberal professions do not participate in its work, although their interests as landowners or occupiers of rural holdings are materially affected by it.

2. As regards the peasant class itself, the unit which displays the greatest vitality is not the volost, but the township or village. Business transactions, questions as to education, etc., are usually settled by the officers and the assembly of the township, especially in districts where the communal system still prevails. Yet the township unit is considered in the light of a private law corporation, and it is the volost which plays the part of the lowest administrative subdivision.

3. While the volost is thus not very active for the promotion of its own interests, it is overburdened with tasks of police and finance imposed on it by the Government, with the result that it represents

everything irksome and onerous in rural practice and that the best men try in every way to avoid it.

4. The judicial activity of the volost court is confused and devoid of authority. The judges are supposed to administer customary law, but in truth they are bewildered by the variety and complexity of relations created by the movement of legislation and of economic practice, and their jurisdiction in civil and petty criminal matters is at best a kind of shifting equity tempered by corruption. The clerk of the parish is too often a crafty promoter of the latter. Lastly, this whole cumbersome system of rural administration is under the meddlesome and by no means disinterested supervision of Government officials and of nominees of the local gentry, who even exercise the power to subject the luckless parish officers to fines and imprisonment. All these features have proved a great handicap in the development of rural self-government.

This short sketch of peasant administration discloses the characteristic and unfortunate dualism of the reform legislation in the 'sixties. It was a compromise between liberal ideals and bureaucratic limitations: sometimes the latter actually succeeded in distorting the progressive intentions of

the reformers, in most cases they at least hampered them.

One of the results of the situation was that while the peasants were presented with local self-government of a kind, the gentry and other upper classes of rural districts were left without any. Their affairs and interests were diverted in the direction of *provincial* institutions. A committee for the reorganisation of the counties was created immediately after the completion of the emancipation statute. It was initiated by Nicholas Milutine with a view of endowing Russia with a network of efficient self-governing provinces, but it was intercepted at the start by the reactionaries, smarting from the effects of emancipation and apprehensive of further inroads at the hands of the "revolutionary" Milutine. The great reformer was traduced and ousted in a manner which will be an ever-memorable example of political ingratitude. D. Valuieff, a clever time-server, took his place, and the proceedings were conducted in a spirit of duplicity which deprived the provincial reform of a great deal of its significance. Enough was achieved, however, by the public spirit of the age to make the Zemstvo reform of 1864 a landmark in the history of Russia.

The "Zemstvo Statute" of January 1, 1864,

created two sets of institutions—assemblies and executive boards. Each district (uyezd) elected representatives for the district assembly, meeting once a year for some ten days, according to a certain system which will be described presently, and an executive board (uprava) transacting business under the direction and the supervision of the assembly in the course of the year. Similarly, an assembly and a board acted in the province or government comprising several districts, the members of the assembly in this case being elected at the district meetings. The electoral system in the district, from which all the authorities were derived either directly or indirectly, was characterised by high franchise qualifications and by the splitting up of the electorate into colleges. Of these there were three : the first was composed of landowners possessed of real estate of the value of 15,000 Rb. (about £1500 at the rate of exchange before the war), or of owners of factories and other business undertakings of a similar value or of 6000 Rb. yearly turnover. Smaller owners were not disenfranchised, but had to club together and meet previously in order to elect representatives according to the above rates. The second college comprised townspeople with analogous franchise qualifications. The third consisted of representa-

tives of the peasantry by volosts. The economic importance of the gentry in the rural districts assured it of a very great share in the ultimate electoral results: about 43% of the deputies in the early Zemstvos belonged to the gentry class; the peasants sent 38%, while all other professions were represented by about 18%. Another feature designed to secure the predominance of the gentry was the fact that the assemblies were to be presided over by the provincial and district marshals, although the executive boards were granted elective chairmen. It was intended to restrict the Zemstvos to the management of economic interests, while administrative affairs were to be reserved to functionaries appointed by the Government; the class group of the gentry or hereditary *noblesse* retained corporate existence and the right of presenting petitions as to political questions. As a matter of fact it was impossible to draw a definite line between administration and economic functions, as may be gathered even from a simple enumeration of the departments of Zemstvo activity: (1) imposition and collection of provincial and district rates and services in kind; (2) the management of property belonging to the Zemstvos; (3) taking care of a sufficiency of food and other supplies and measures of relief in case of

shortage; (4) the construction and keeping in good order of roads, canals, quays and other means of communication; (5) arrangements as to the mutual insurance of local bodies; (6) the re-arrangement of hospitals, charity organisations, asylums, relief of the poor and of the sick; (7) measures of public health, of veterinary supervision and treatment; (8) the prevention and suppression of fires; (9) the spread of popular education and participation in the management of schools and other institutions of enlightenment; (10) assistance to industry and commerce, measures for checking the ravages of insects and diseases of plants; (11) the performance of obligations imposed on localities for the benefit of the military and civil administration, e.g. the provision of barracks or the quartering of soldiers.

To mention one example of the inevitable overlapping of attributions—as regards popular education the Zemstvos were invited to open schools, to provide them with equipment, to pay teachers, in fact to maintain the schools in a state of efficiency, and yet the appointment of the teachers and the supervision of the instruction was put in the hands of a school board in which Crown officials and representatives of the *noblesse* and of the clergy were in the majority. However, the saying that he

who pays the piper orders the tune held good in this as in other cases. As the Zemstvos provided the means they acquired the actual management of this important branch of local administration—not without much friction and obstruction. Another point in which the distrust of the Government as regards the newly created bodies found vent was the absence of compulsory power. In all cases when force was required to put by-laws into execution, to collect rates, to seize goods, etc., the Zemstvos could not act by themselves but had to apply for help to the general police, which was often very remiss in assisting the new organisations and in any case regarded their requirements as of secondary importance. Lastly, the acts of the Zemstvos, both as to decrees or by-laws and as to appointments of all kinds, were subjected to constant and suspicious supervision by governors and other agents of the Central Authority; when the trend of general policy pointed towards reaction, as it often did, the Zemstvos were hampered and harassed under the slightest pretexts. This was not a fortunate situation: many strong liberals were driven away from Zemstvo work and did not spare bitter criticism of such incomplete and stunted institutions.

Yet it would be not only wrong, but absurd to

disparage the immense work achieved by the Zemstvos in an exceedingly short space of time. The wonder is not that they were hampered and distracted, but that they achieved so much. It is not an exaggeration to say that a new age was initiated by their activity in Russia. Such bodies as, for example, the Moscow provincial Zemstvo, under the leadership of Dmitry Shipoff, would have done honour to any country, and it is not their fault that they were not able to carry out their plans in their entirety. An estimate of the activity of the Zemstvos and of the rate of their progress may be obtained by glancing at the movement of receipts and expenditure in the years 1865–1912. In 1865 the Zemstvo provinces started with a modest income of 5 millions Rb. In 1912 it had reached 220 millions in the original thirty-four Zemstvo provinces and 250 together with the receipts of the western provinces placed under a special *régime :* in other words, the original figure has been multiplied fifty times. As to expenditure, a considerable share has to be assigned to cover duties imposed by the State, e.g., the construction of barracks or the maintenance of prisons. Productive Zemstvo expenditure develops outside such necessary, imposed payments. Now, in 1871, 43% of the expenditure budget could

be devoted to voluntary requirements, while in 1910 80% was allotted to them. The repartition of expenditure under various heads is very characteristic. In 1895 nearly 13½ millions or 20·5% were contributed for the needs of the central government; the service of loans and the formation of reserve capitals swallowed somewhat over 10 millions, or rather more than 15%; the cost of Zemstvo administration amounted to somewhat over 6 millions (9·5%); popular education was represented by 9·3 millions (14%); charitable purposes by 1 million (1·5%); roads about 4 millions (6%); medicine and sanitation 17·8 millions (27%); veterinary department 1 million (1·5%); measures for economic assistance 0·7 (1%); various sundries 1·5 million (3·5%). The same items work out in the following manner in 1912:—

Government requirements	10·5 mill.	(5%).
Zemstvo administration	15½ mill.	(7%).
Loans and reserve capitals	27 mill.	(11%).
Roads, etc.	15 mill.	(7%).
Education	66½ mill.	(30%).
Charities and poor relief	3½ mill.	(1·7%).
Medicine and sanitation	57½ mill.	(26%).
Veterinary service	6 mill.	(2·8%).
Economic measures	14 mill.	(6·3%).

In the budget of the six western governments with modified Zemstvo organisation, expenditure on schools and on medical arrangements figured in each case with 7 millions Rb., corresponding to 23% of the whole. We shall have occasion to consider in detail the remarkable progress achieved by the Zemstvos in the field of popular education, and the history of this department may be taken as typical of the aspirations and methods of Russian self-government. A reference to the above tables will show that not less momentous progress was marked by the activity of the Zemstvos in connection with medical help and sanitation. Measures of economic policy have been taken up energetically of late years by the more progressive Zemstvos in other ways: the acquisition of agricultural machinery, the spread of agronomic education, improved methods of cultivation, insurance against fires and bad harvests, etc.

Particularly striking results have been obtained by organising statistical work on an extensive scale. A singular gap is noticeable under the head of poor relief and charities. The explanation of this strange fact is certainly not to be sought in callous indifference for destitution. The charitable disposition and the sensitive pity of the Russians is proverbial. The scanty column of expenditure

under this head is explained partly by the lack of a comprehensive poor law and partly by the fact that the burden of supporting the poor falls principally on village communities and on towns, while the Church and private individuals are very lavish of alms—an attitude condemned by political economists but connected with deeply rooted habits of mind. This is in any case a side of Zemstvo activity in which there is evidently most room for improvement.

Taken as a whole, the services rendered to Russia by the Zemstvos have been immense. The new factor of self-government introduced into the life of the country by the reforms of 1864 has brilliantly justified its right to existence and development. And yet its very success has called forth bitter opposition from the forces of the half-defeated old *régime*. It is my painful duty to call attention to the stages of a campaign of persecution which, though it has not achieved its end, has materially curtailed the beneficial effects of the organisation. The honour of carrying on the war against the most promising force of modern Russia appertains to the reaction which set in after the murder of Alexander II, and has been going on with some interruptions until now. It has been engineered and encouraged in the highest spheres of Petersburg

bureaucracy, and it is not for lack of official sanction that it has been unable to carry out its main purpose. As the rise of provincial self-government was preceded by the local reorganisation of the volost, even so the reactionary measures affecting provincial self-government have to be considered in connection with a far-reaching scheme for subjecting the peasantry to the strong government of officials representing the class interests of the gentry, and deriving their power from administrative centralisation. An attempt in this direction was made by the institution of "land-captains" (*Zemskie natchalniki*) under the law of June 12, 1889.

"The new officer was, on the one hand, made the centre of all the administrative affairs of his district —sanitary measures, relief of the poor, relief in cases of agricultural distress, supervision as to all material and moral interests of the population. On the other, he was to be judge in the first instance in minor civil and criminal cases. Thirdly, he was to act more especially as a guardian and controller in all cases which concerned the peasantry. As one of these land-captains pointedly expressed it, they were to act as nurses to the peasantry. The punishing power of these nurses is very extensive. They have the right of sentencing village elders and judges to prison, and are even provided with dis-

cretionary power to put a peasant into prison without any form of trial and without any possibility of appeal, simply for supposed disobedience."

". . . a guarantee seems provided by the right of the inhabitants to appeal from the decision of land-captains to sessions, composed of the same magistrates under the chairmanship of the marshal of the district and with the adjunct of a few trained lawyers. This minority of jurists is exerting some beneficial influence on the lawless practices of the land-captains, but then the decisions of this district board are themselves subject to be overruled by the board of the province, in which the legal element is all but absent, and there the procedure stops. The department of this peculiar arbitrary justice is not in direct communication with the Senate, which towers over all other courts of law."[1]

Simultaneously with this measure, designed to revive squirearchy in a new shape, a new statute was enacted for the Zemstvos. The arch-reactionary Minister of the Interior, Count Dmitry Tolstoy, had planned to subordinate the Zemstvos completely to the Crown officials and to turn them into boards for carrying out the orders of centralised bureaucracy. The Count died, however, without having

[1] Vinogradoff in "Lectures on the Nineteenth Century" (Cambridge, 1903), pp. 263–4.

put this delightful scheme into operation. The new statute of 1890 turned out to be only a corrected edition of that of 1864—corrected, to be sure, in a characteristic manner. The gist of the change is disclosed by the altered franchise. Instead of the three colleges of 1864 arranged mainly on property qualifications, the electoral groups were formed frankly on class lines. The first college is composed of members of the gentry (*noblesse*), the second of persons belonging to all other classes except the peasantry and the clergy. A third group is formed by the peasants, who have to elect their representatives not in colleges, but in the volosts, the lists of these representatives being submitted for confirmation to the governor of the province. This is explicit enough, and the character of the change is further emphasised by the proportional distribution of the deputies among the orders; 57% of the seats fall to the gentry, 13% to intermediate classes, about 30% to the peasantry. The clergy do not take part in the representation. This reorganisation undoubtedly poured a good deal of water into the wine of Zemstvo workers. The policy both of the Home Office and of provincial governors kept on a level with the reactionary tendency initiated by the statute of 1890. For instance, after agrarian troubles in the South in

1902, statistical work carried on by the Zemstvos was stopped in twelve provinces because the statisticians were accused of carrying on revolutionary agitation. And yet, strange to say, even these energetic counter-attacks did not succeed in stifling the progressive spirit of the self-governing provinces. The latter could not be prevented from spending money on schools and hospitals, on roads and statistics. In 1900 the magician of the Ministry of Finance, Witte, himself entered the lists against the obnoxious counties. The law of June 12, 1900, enacted that—

"No province is to increase rates by more than three per cent of the previous year."

It has been pointed out that this method of holding expenditure and self-imposition chained to the budget of previous years is entirely lacking in a rational basis. It just falls as a block on schemes of development, and the greatest sufferers are those who for one reason or the other had held back with their imposition and requirements.

Moreover, the late Count Witte presented a secret memoir to the Emperor in which he drew an elaborate comparison between bureaucracy and self-government, and sought to prove that the further progress of the latter would inevitably lead

to the downfall of autocratic monarchy. Some of his arguments are so characteristic that I cannot refrain from referring to them at some length.

They amount to this, that self-government, even local or provincial, is in its essence a political arrangement and as such opposed to absolute monarchy. If self-government is to live and to act rationally it has to develop into a constitution. If it cannot be allowed to do so, it has to be replaced by a centralised bureaucracy. After granting that such a bureaucracy leads to arbitrary power and dead formalism, and quoting the contemptuous remarks of Stein as to official writing machines, Count Witte nevertheless assumes that Russian bureaucracy will produce a new political type, unknown to history, that it will in fact turn out to be an aristocracy of work and enlightenment. . . . This government will somehow abstain from arbitrary measures, arrests, exceptional tribunals and other kinds of oppression, it will guarantee freedom of labour, thought and conscience. As for society, it must be left to follow private interests and in them to seek an outlet for its energies. Nothing is more apt to ruin the prestige of authority than a frequent and extensive employment of repression. Measures of repression are dangerous, and when they get to be continuous, they either

lead to an explosion or else turn the people into a casual throng, into human dust.[1]

As you see, the most prominent among Russian bureaucrats, Witte, boldly challenged self-government on behalf of an all-powerful bureaucracy. The trial by battle might have been decided in favour of the latter if the opponents had been left to fight out their duel in a "stricken field." But the contest was not waged on these lines: it assumed the shape of a competition for the production of masterpieces. In other words, self-government was able to produce some very creditable results in spite of difficulties. Bureaucracy had also to show what it could do for the people. And its achievements were far from brilliant at the very time when it was especially overbearing and oppressive.

The conduct of the Japanese war could not be described as a triumph of Russian officialdom.

[1] Reference from "Lectures on the Nineteenth Century," pp. 273–4.

CHAPTER III

POPULAR EDUCATION

IT is not my intention to attempt a general survey of the development of Russian education —the subject is too wide and could not be treated without many digressions into the field of political and ecclesiastical history. There is, however, one aspect of the subject which is of utmost importance for us in connection with the study of Russian self-government, namely, *elementary* education : it is only by means of a sound system of elementary education that self-government can acquire a solid basis and a sure prospect of future development. Therefore, it is not astonishing to find that the growth of self-governing institutions in the provinces and towns has exercised a decisive influence on the progress of popular education. It is hardly necessary to add that schools of the higher grades—Universities and gymnasiums or secondary public schools—attained a sufficiently high standing and spread over the country long before elementary schools had made any considerable advance either

in numbers or in quality. As a matter of fact, the earlier development of superior schools contributed not a little to the formation and progress of the more modest elementary institutions. It is undoubtedly easier to start higher teaching among the well-to-do classes than to organise the masses of the people for educational purposes.

From the point of view of Ancient Russia all properly conceived instruction had to aim at the training of pious men abiding by God's precepts. These precepts were interpreted to the orthodox by the Church, and the true Christian had to follow the teaching of the Church without flinching or discussion. Knowledge outside this religious sphere was not directly condemned, but regarded as a form of human curiosity which might be indulged in to some extent provided it did not distract attention from the main purpose. This unreasoning piety was naturally combined with a religious creed in which stress was laid not on the intellectual mastery of ideas, but on adherence to ritual and customary practices. Regular schooling did not play any part in such a scheme of life, and even the priest received but scanty teaching: the "Stoglav" synod of 1551 condemned the illiteracy of the clergy and enjoined them to open schools in the houses of the best priests in the towns and to teach their children to read, to write,

and to sing Church music. It was quite common even in the seventeenth century for candidates to be admitted to orders who could neither read nor write, and had merely managed to learn some of the services by heart. The movement for the revision of books and ecclesiastical practices in the second half of the century and the struggle with the Old Ritualists made it clear to the Moscow authorities that some systematic education was a national want. A Greek bishop, the Metropolitan of Gaza, Païsios Ligarides, put it this way: "If I were asked, what is the support of clerical and secular office, I should answer—firstly, schools, and, secondly, schools, and, thirdly, schools." In the reigns of the Tsars Alexis Mikhalovitch and Fedor Alexeievitch, father and elder brother of Peter the Great, scholastic academies were founded in connection with the monasteries of St. Andrew and of the "Saviour's Ikon" (Zaikonospassky) in Moscow, under the rival influence of two schools—a Latin school taking its inspiration from Kiev and indirectly from the Jesuits, and a Hellenistic school prompted by Greeks from Constantinople and Mount Athos and patronised by men of the stricter Moscow stamp. There was in this way a certain literary stir in the superior sphere of Muscovite society towards the end of the seventeenth

century, but the current did not reach very deeply and was not strong enough to lead to extensive institutional developments. When Peter appeared on the scene, the importance of instruction for the purpose of acquiring skill in crafts of every kind became one of the leading preoccupations of the reformers. The first Government school created by the Tsar was a navigation school, opened in Moscow of all places, under the guidance of a Scotsman—a certain Farquharson. We need not concern ourselves with the fate of this institution, which became eventually the Naval College of St. Petersburg, nor with that of the kindred Engineering and Artillery Colleges. It must be noted that Peter entertained the ambitious project of endowing his Empire with a network of secular and ecclesiastical schools. He instituted schools of arithmetic in 1714, and enjoined the clergy by the regulations of 1720 to open regular ecclesiastical schools. But although pupils were commandeered to those establishments and teachers were subjected to rules instinct with "frightfulness," the attendance was of the poorest and the result disappointing.

Catherine II made a second effort in the same direction with the help of Yankovitch, a Serbian pedagogue lent by Joseph II. A statute for primary schools was issued in 1786, but although it was

drawn up in a spirit worthy of the age of the Encyclopædists, and prescribed among other things the study of the " Obligations of a man and citizen," the results obtained were meagre. This may be gathered, e.g., from the fact that in the large and important province of St. Petersburg there were only some 2000 pupils in 1802. Private tuition had still to supply in the main the needs of popular education. Under these circumstances, liberal projects initiated in the beginning of Alexander I's reign, though excellent in theory and aiming at a complete educational ladder ascending from elementary schools to universities, were doomed to failure. A proper teaching staff was all but absent, and the peasantry of the age of serfdom proved an unsuitable material for the spread of popular education.

Nicholas I's reign is marked by the subjection of all initiative to stringent bureaucratic supervision. Private schools were prohibited and an elaborate statute for the organisation of schools passed in 1828. In spite of the refrigerating atmosphere of Nicholas I's policy some progress in popular education may be noticed during the thirty years of his reign. It was a great thing that the gentry was acquiring idealistic notions as to knowledge and culture. Such centres as the University of Moscow

could not fail to spread enlightenment around them. In the serried ranks of bureaucracy itself the ministry of State domains which had to deal with free "State peasants" was busy with opening schools and attracting teachers. The totals of Nicholas I's reign may be gauged by the help of the following statistical data obtained in 1856, very soon after Nicholas' death. A population of sixty-four millions was served by 8227 schools with 450,000 pupils, that is one pupil per 143 heads of population. In Central Russia the percentage was about one in 100, but it fell considerably in the eastern governments, and Siberia had altogether only 312 schools.

The epoch of Alexander II produced a momentous change in this as in every other respect. The crisis was intimately connected with the institution of self-government: the new Zemstvos and the rejuvenated municipalities of Central Russia became the pioneers of popular education, while the emancipation of the serfs created an entirely new basis in a free peasantry, eager for instruction and firmly convinced of the power of knowledge. The regulations of 1864 and of 1874, the latter still in force, provided the external framework of the movement. It was deemed necessary to give the system a particularly conservative stamp, and in 1873 the landed gentry,

or *noblesse*, was called upon " to stand guard at the gates of the school against mischievous influences." This explains the peculiar cast of school administration as definitely adopted in 1874. All schools opened by the Zemstvo of a district were to be supervised by a council presided over by the marshal of the gentry and consisting of a ministerial inspector, a representative of the Ministry of the Interior, a deputy from the clergy and delegates from the district. The shares in burdens and responsibilities were apportioned in the following way : the endowment of teachers and the equipment of schools with books and other scholastic materials fell to the Zemstvos, the construction of buildings as well as lighting and heating to the village communities, and the control of tuition to the Government inspectors. As a matter of fact, it was impossible to exclude the self-governing organisations from taking a lively interest and exerting influence as regards the subject-matter itself, that is as regards school tuition. The teaching was restricted to three years, and embraced the elementary study of religion, Church Slavonic, Russian, arithmetic, and such notions of history, geography and natural science as could be imparted by means of class reading.

A rapid increase in the number of schools has to

be noted in the period between 1863 and 1880: 14,500 schools, or 69% of the whole number, had been opened in these years, which coincide with the beginnings of Zemstvo self-government: in the Zemstvo provinces of Central Russia the increase amounted to 78%.

In 1884 a new departure was made by the impetus given to Church schools in the parishes. As I have said already, a tradition of ecclesiastical teaching runs all through Russian history, but the activity of the Church was never very energetic because it had to be carried on in spare time by priests and clerks who attended primarily to their ecclesiastical duties. The rise of spiritual consciousness which characterises the history of Alexander II's reign led to a marked change in this as well as in other respects. There was also another side to this revival, namely, a reaction against the free-thinking and materialistic conceptions prevalent among the liberals. Scripture "and Divinity" were taught as necessary subjects in all the schools of secular institutions, but this was not deemed sufficient by the votaries of ardent nationalism. The leaders of the movement made a stand against the prosaic secularism of the Zemstvo school, and strove for a complete subjection of primary education to orthodox Christianity as interpreted by the Russian

Church. As an official document issued by the Holy Synod puts it: "The character of the Church School is determined by the fact that it not only possesses among the subjects of its curriculum one bearing the title of 'Religion,' but that the whole of the instruction must be permeated by the Church spirit and gravitate towards the Church as the centre of the religious and moral life of the local community."[1] The principal leader of the revival was a former professor of the University of Moscow, S. Ratchinsky, who devoted his whole time and energy to teaching in a village school and acquired a wide influence on other patrons and teachers. Eventually the Government and the Synod took the Church schools under their special protection. Besides the parochial schools of that type, the Church was given supervision over so-called schools of "literacy," institutions with a very rudimentary programme and poorly qualified teachers, which sprang up in many places on account of the lack of better instruction. It is contended by the opponents of Church schools of both kinds that the ecclesiastical policy followed by these schools does

[1] "Explanatory Memorandum to a project of Law relating to Church Parochial Schools," referred to by Darlington, "Education in Russia," 337 (Vol. XXIII. of Special Reports of the Board of Education)

not benefit tuition, and that in some cases the very existence of the schools was no more than a hollow pretence. In proof of the superiority of the teaching in Zemstvo schools, it has been pointed out that on an average 71·5 children attend at secular schools and only 36·5, in spite of Government patronage, at Church schools.

However this may be, the rapid spread of Church schools is a feature of the situation in the last thirty years which has to be taken into account in many ways. It is manifested in the statistics of school organisation and attendance. If we put together the report of the Ministry of Public Instruction for 1891 and that of the Holy Synod for 1892, we find that there were 27,000 secular schools, if we may use the expression, though they correspond in no way to the *école laïque* of France or to the board schools of England. The number of pupils in these establishments was 1,800,000 and the cost 16 millions Rb., of which 1,500,000 was defrayed by the Government, 3 millions by towns, 4 millions by villages, 5,300,000 by the Zemstvos, and 1,200,000 by private patrons. As against these the Church had the supervision of 30,000 schools with 931,000 pupils. Of these, twelve thousand were parochial schools with approximately the same programme as that of the

Zemstvo institutions, while 18,000 were "literacy" schools with 420,000 pupils.

The country had been making considerable headway since the miserable situation at the beginning of the nineteenth century, but, of course, things were very far indeed from universal instruction. It must be remembered, however, that even in the most favourably situated countries of the West the ideal of such instruction was set very late and achieved at the cost of very great efforts. The landmark in England may be said to be Forster's Bill of 1871, and in France the measures passed by Jules Ferry in 1881 and in subsequent years.

In Russia there could be no talk of *obligatory* instruction: neither the schools nor the teachers necessary for its working were available; besides, the enormous difficulties presented by distances, bad roads, weather conditions and economic want constituted unsurmountable obstacles for the time being.

The final results of what may be called the Zemstvo period in the evolution of popular education may be gathered from the following figures representing the state of elementary schools in 1903, just before the Russo-Japanese conflict. There were altogether 84,500 schools, of which

about 40,000 were under the management of the Ministry of Public Instruction and rather more than 43,000 under the management of the Holy Synod. Of the latter the greater part were plain establishments of literacy, and altogether the standing of the Church schools was considerably lower than that of the lay institutions; this is reflected in the fact that the secular schools, though fewer in number, served a greater number of pupils, namely, over 3 millions as against less than 2 millions in the Church schools (1,889,000).

And now we come to another turning point in the winding course of development.

The commotion of the Japanese war, and of the constitutional changes produced by it, called forth an unprecedented activity of the State in regard to popular education. As it was recognised after the Crimean war that drill-sergeants were not the most important public officers, even so it was felt after the Japanese war that Russian disasters had been brought about by the neglect of intellectual efficiency and of popular education.

The radical change of views in this respect is strikingly indicated by the sudden increase of State expenditure for elementary schools. These establishments, which had been first left to vegetate somehow and had then been consigned to the care

of counties, of towns, and of the clergy, assume all of a sudden a great importance in the State, to judge at least by the sensitive thermometer of Treasury appropriations. Large credits are voted from year to year, and the striving towards universal education becomes a characteristic sign of the time. This is effected under the unremitting pressure of the Duma, "in the atmosphere of popular representation," as one of the workers in the field has aptly put it.

The story of the ten years which followed the rise of national representation is well worth studying. It throws a flood of light on the driving forces and the peculiar obstacles of Russian progress. The Duma had to go to work arm-in-arm with an executive organisation—the Ministry of Public Instruction, which, though not unwilling to contribute its share to a task of recognised public utility, was hampered in every way by traditions of red tape and by aloofness from actual life. It has even been said with much truth that the Ministry of Public Instruction started with a deep-rooted distrust of public instruction. Its machinery was clogged with waste paper, if one may use the expression. Mr. E. Kovalevsky relates with some humour the following characteristic little incident: "Twice in the course of the year I have met in the

streets of St. Petersburg a deputation from the town of Efremov, engaged in presenting a request for financial assistance for the purpose of building a town school. The deputation had been petitioning for seven years and had had to apply to twelve different institutions on its errands. At last the Minister 'himself' had assured these gentlemen that their request had been granted. One may imagine how glad they were, but they were informed that a thirteenth instance was still in front of them —namely, the Senate." Such methods are not exactly encouraging for the display of initiative and public spirit. Yet under the powerful pressure of a new political current running through the channel of the Duma, even bureaucracy had to mend its ways in some respects. A rather hazy memoir on the introduction of universal instruction was prepared by the Ministry for the second Duma, but it did not reach the stage of discussion there, and it is to the third Duma that belongs the honour of making a real start in that direction.

The first step was the passing of the law of June 3, 1908. The principle was laid down that the State ought to take over from the counties and from the towns the charge of paying the teachers at the rate of 360 Rb. a year to every teacher of a class of fifty pupils, and of 30 Rb. (increased later on to 60) to the

priest for religious instruction. As Russia already possessed about 70,000 elementary schools of all types with some 5 million pupils, and as the total number of children of school age (from six to eleven) was supposed to be 13½ millions, 270,000 sets of fifty pupils each were recognised to be necessary to accommodate the pupils under a system of universal education. A series of appropriations increasing by 10 millions every year in the course of ten years was suggested, but the Ministry asked for much less and the Duma voted about 7 millions to begin with.

It is rather significant that the promoters of popular education did not succeed, in spite of strenuous efforts, to carry a law "consolidating" the rule of gradual increases for the required number of years. The idea was constantly present before the minds of the legislators and repeatedly referred to in debate. It was worked out in fuller and fuller detail, the growth of the population being duly taken into account. The goal of universal instruction was set first in 1920, then in 1922, ultimately in 1924, while the number of pupils to be accommodated was reckoned out to be nearer 15 than 13½ millions. What is even more important, it was made a condition for obtaining grants from the Treasury that the counties and towns applying for them should present a plan for the gradual introduction

of universal instruction and a map of the network of schools designed to carry out the plan. Nearly all the Zemstvo districts have presented such plans by this time, while, curiously enough, out of some 960 municipalities only about 200 had done so by 1913. The Council of Ministers and the Council of the Empire entertained an invincible antipathy against the idea of a "consolidation" of increasing expenditure for a number of years. The arguments used were chiefly of a financial kind, but in the light of other features of opposition to educational reform one cannot help thinking that the Ministry and the "House of Lords" were also actuated by a vague dread of the progressive tendency of popular education.

In any case, the educational reformers were not weary of insisting again and again on the requirements of popular education and on improving its prospects. The yearly growth of appropriations for the purpose of widening the network of schools during the five sessions of the third Duma is represented by the following table:

In 1908 .	6,900,000
,, 1909 .	6,000,000
,, 1910 .	10,000,000
,, 1911 .	7,000,000
,, 1912 .	9,000,000

Though the main effort of the Duma was directed to provide funds for the payment of teachers, it must not be supposed that the appropriations from the Treasury in the domain of popular education were restricted to that object. The erection of school buildings was primarily the task of Zemstvos, municipalities and village communities, but the State had to help also in this respect, and it did so mainly by opening credits on advantageous conditions—usually at 3% with repayment spread over twenty years. In order to meet this demand a fund was formed in accordance with a law passed on May 28, 1909: the honorary designation of Peter the Great's fund was very appropriately given to this endowment. It grew by yearly increases in connection with the spread of the network of primary schools. It may be added that prospective calculations of the expenditure on all hands for 1922, when the scheme of universal instruction was expected to be completed, pointed to a general outlay of 150 million Rb. a year, of which 50 millions had been appropriated by the end of 1910 (38 millions to Ministry schools and 12 millions to Synod schools).[1] The cost of buildings was calculated at 360 millions and the Zemstvos and municipalities were expected to increase their charges in this respect by 77 millions,

[1] Made at the close of 1910.

while the expenditure on the upkeep of houses, fuel, light, etc., would have to be raised by 20 millions. Such figures, though merely approximate and likely to be modified by further measures, give some idea of the magnitude of the task and also of the firm course pursued by the leaders of the third Duma in this matter.

Altogether the services rendered by the Duma representation in developing the productive expenditure of the Empire can hardly be over-estimated. It may be sufficient to say that the expenditure for all forms of public instruction was actually doubled[1] in the interval between 1907 and 1912, rising from 85 millions to 170 millions a year.

The principles and main results were endorsed at a great conference of the workers for elementary education held in Moscow in 1912 after a remarkable statement made by the reporter of the Public Instruction Committee in the Duma, Mr. E. P. Kovalevsky.

This is the bright side of the picture, but one must not overlook the shady side either. It is partly expressed in the rivalry between Church schools and secular schools. There were other important points of dispute, e.g. the question as to the part to be

[1] The Ministry of Public Instruction came in for an increase of 154%, while the endowment of teachers rose to 503%.

played by the Russian language in the curriculum of schools situated in districts with no Russian population. But the opposition between clerical management and secular management proved to be the most dangerous rock for projects of thorough-going reform and rapid progress. The Holy Synod had received large subsidies (7,400,000 in 1908) from the Government in connection with its schools ever since 1884, when the system was regularised. But when the policy of gradual increases for the payment of teachers was instituted by the third Duma, the Synod claimed corresponding appropriations, and additional credits in this respect were first voted during the session of 1909–10. It could not be denied that the underpaid teachers of parish schools and of "literacy schools" had as great a claim to assistance from the State as the workers of Zemstvo and town schools. But there was a material difficulty in adjusting standards and in elaborating a comprehensive plan of school extension on divergent lines and under two different systems of personnel and administration. For this reason the Duma reformers, although not opposing grants to the clergy for the maintenance of its teaching staff, considered the spread of Church schools in the light of an extraneous element and demanded that these institutions should be ad-

mitted to the benefits of periodical increases on the condition of their conforming to certain rules. There were two principal conditions of this kind : (1) the entering into an agreement with the school authorities of the State in regard to the filling up of definite places in the authorised network of schools : (2) the appointment of properly qualified teachers. The Synod administration did not refuse to comply with these conditions in principle, but tried to evade them by applying for grants in aid *en bloc*, without submitting their programme and policy to the examination of the Duma.

The split on these questions came to a head in 1912, during the fifth and last session of the third Duma. Under the influence of the clergy the Council of the Empire sent back for further examination a comprehensive scheme of periodical increases for the purpose of carrying out universal instruction. When the subject came up again in the Council of the Empire on the reports of a " Conciliation Committee," the scheme of the Duma was again wrecked by a considerable majority led by Count Witte, who characterised the plan as an attempt to get into Paradise by means of murdering a child. The child in question was the Church school. As a result of these occurrences further work proceeded in the fourth Duma along the line

of least resistance, and in the shape of a half-hearted compromise between the two rival systems. This is undoubtedly a great drawback, and the absence of a guiding law settling the question as to periodical increases is another. Yet the progress in the direction of universal instruction and of improvements in the status and efficiency of the teaching staff has been maintained and several substantial improvements have been achieved. The law of July 7, 1913, not only secured an increase of 10 millions Rb., but introduced two very important alterations. It was decided to raise the minimum salary of teachers from 360 to 480 Rb., and a scale of four additions of 60 Rb. each on the completion of every five years of service was adopted. That means that a qualified teacher was entitled to 720 Rb. a year after twenty years' work. This swelled correspondingly the expenditure of the State, but both the School and the Budget Commission warmly advocated the grants, and the latter were cheerfully passed by the Duma. Thus, in spite of the fact that there is no legal scheme establishing once for all the financial steps by which universal instruction has to be achieved, the idea of gradual progress to this goal has taken firm hold of the mind of the legislators and of the Imperial executive, and the movement goes on uninterruptedly. It has been

temporarily blocked by the war, as all other productive work, but apart from this inevitable setback, the completion of the arrangements necessary for universal education is as much a matter of certainty as human affairs can be. Russia has accomplished almost exactly half the journey and should be able to reach the goal in some ten years.

Before leaving the subject it is well to draw attention to two more points. Unquestionably the development of a system of universal instruction must depend not only on the provision of accommodation and salaries, but also on a sufficient number of qualified teachers and on their convenient distribution all over the country. This fact, together with the topographic and economic difficulties, makes it undesirable and even impossible to introduce obligatory school attendance at one stroke. That is why, according to the Russian plan, the legal obligation to send children to school is made to depend on the decision of local authorities.

As to the duration of the teaching, a four years' course is contemplated now, and the school of four years is being actually introduced in the more advanced localities of the Empire. The three years' course will die a natural death as well as the exceedingly insufficient arrangements of the "literacy" schools. The principal object is still

to secure a practical extension of the network of elementary schools. In coming years people will remember the dark ages before " universal instruction " with a shudder. Let us hope that more fortunate future generations may also remember with gratitude the energetic workers who achieved the desired end and, before all, the modest, self-sacrificing teachers whose ceaseless toil is the condition precedent to all improvements in this field.

CHAPTER IV

SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE WAR

A CHARACTERISTIC feature of the situation which had arisen in Russia towards the beginning of the new century was the necessity for the State of appealing to the help of the self-governing institutions on all occasions when the country was in trouble. In case of the spread of epidemics, or of a famine, or of a great war, there was nothing for it but to turn to the devotion and energy of the suspected and maligned Zemstvo and town organisations. Such was the case during the famine of 1898, for example, during the war with Japan, and again during the present war. On such occasions the Zemstvos were eager to contribute towards social welfare, and always came forward with extensive and efficient help. In order to do so they could not restrict themselves to the ordinary routine of their everyday administration. They were driven out of the narrow limits of their class franchise and had to call in outsiders belonging to the numerous groups of the poorer intellectuals who were debarred from

taking part in the close assemblies of the provinces and districts. The natural intermediaries in such cases were the members of the so-called "third element," namely, the numerous professional employees of the Zemstvo institutions — doctors, teachers, statisticians, veterinary surgeons, agronomists, clerks who did paid work under the Zemstvos. In ordinary times there was a good deal of jealousy between the privileged Zemstvo representatives and electors on one hand, and the staffs of the employees on the other. But in cases of emergency the two groups joined hands and the "third element" proved of invaluable help for the further mobilisation of social workers. Relief work during the famine, for instance, demanded thousands of self-sacrificing men and women to visit the stricken districts, to organise feeding centres, to control the supply of provisions, etc. These thousands were readily forthcoming; they were in most cases students of the Universities and of the women's colleges, school teachers, small employees of every kind. Nothing could surpass the devotion and collective efficiency of these improvised hosts: the Russian intellectual proletarian came out on such occasions in his best form, ready to go anywhere and do anything, absolutely indifferent to danger, bearing up with every kind of hardship and

privation, uncouth, fantastic and sometimes fanatical, but unassumingly heroic and revelling in the chance of giving his life for the people. It is not on rare occasions and for short periods that such efforts were made. And yet instead of coming to the conclusion that men like these ought to be drawn closer to political life, that this self-sacrificing energy should become a permanent source of strength to the commonwealth, bureaucratic rulers disbanded these improvised levies as soon as they had a chance, and often followed up a great wave of popular activity by measures of repression directed against those democratic allies who had helped them when in the lurch.

In 1903, for instance, when the Zemstvos were preparing for a campaign against epidemics, regulations were enacted (August 11, 1903) which cut short all participation of the Zemstvos in the organisation of preventive measures against infectious diseases. A similar attempt was made in the domain of veterinary legislation. Bureaucracy was not only antagonistic to democratic movements by nature: it was also haunted by the dread of a concentration of the Zemstvos for the purpose of obtaining a share in the government of the country. The dread was not without foundation; in proportion as the activity of the Zemstvos increased,

even the most conservative of these bodies felt more and more that they could not carry on their local work without taking stock of the doings of their neighbours and arranging for co-operation with them. Besides, the political education acquired in local work sought a natural outlet in the wider sphere of national interests. It was impossible to invite men to assist people in matters of rural economy in one or the other province, and to forbid them to consider the economic needs and resources of the country as a whole. Gatherings like the congress of agronomic assistance held in Moscow towards the close of 1901, or the meetings of the committee formed in 1902 to investigate the needs of rural husbandry, became naturally the occasion for a concentration of views and of efforts. This process of concentration assumed a decisive political turn in consequence of the events of the Russo-Japanese war. Hospital and evacuation work had to be undertaken on a vast scale, society lent its help in the usual patriotic manner, and among other organisations a powerful All-Zemstvo Union sprang up and did excellent work. When the deficiencies of governmental leadership in the war became more and more apparent, a great wave of indignation spread through the country and the self-governing units became the centres of a move-

ment towards political regeneration. A "Union of Emancipation," started abroad as a secret society, made its way into the Empire. The progressive congresses which the Government did not dare to suppress—the first in Petersburg in November, 1904; the second, third and fourth in Moscow in April, in May and in September, 1905; the fifth in Petersburg in November, 1905—present the principal stages of the constitutional movement which resulted in the creation of the Duma. It would be out of the question for us to follow the history of that movement in its general political course, but I must call your attention to one fact in its earlier period. I mean the emphatic declaration made by the Imperial Government on December 12 (25) as to the necessity of a reorganisation of the Zemstvos on progressive lines. The manifesto in question was drafted by the Home Secretary of that time, Prince Sviatopolk Mirsky, with the view of diverting the rising tide of liberal opinion into the channel of wider self-government, in order to avoid a surrender to constitutionalism. The declarations of that manifesto do not lose their significance for that reason, and it may be said now, in the light of actual events, that the carrying out of that programme would have provided the newborn Russian constitutionalism with a broader and

firmer foundation than that afforded by the hasty attempt to build up the Duma on the basis of a very democratic franchise practically cut off from the support of provincial institutions.

The second clause of that memorable manifesto promised to concede to the county and town institutions "the widest possible participation in the management of the different sides of local welfare, by entrusting to them, within legal limits, the independent conduct of this work; to call to co-operation in these institutions on a uniform basis representatives of all the parts of the population interested in local affairs; in order to achieve this aim with the greatest measure of success, to organise by the side of existing provincial municipal institutions, and in the closest connection with them, self-governing units for the management of affairs bearing on local welfare in districts of small size."

Public attention was diverted from the modest tasks of the Zemstvos, during the first year of the Constitutional activity of the Duma. And yet their history was not without influence on the course of events; for they reflected the disappointment of the well-to-do classes with the disorder and the socialistic schemes which accompanied the liberation movement. A wave of reaction arose not only in Government circles,

but also among the squires and the business men. The Zemstvo and town assemblies of the years 1907–1910 gave expression to this reactionary tendency by stopping a good many undertakings aiming at the spread of popular education and other progressive reforms. This period of disillusionment was, however, of a short duration, and after the restoration of order the great majority of the Zemstvos and of the municipalities returned to the path they had been following before the revolutionary era. Discontent with bureaucratic rule, and the consciousness of duties in regard to the cultural progress of the people, became again the leading tendencies of Zemstvo groups. The necessity of developing local institutions was proclaimed as one of the principal tasks of the third Duma convened on a restricted franchise devised by Stolypine. A good many meetings of the legislative chambers and of their committees were devoted to the discussion of local reforms, but the stubborn resistance of the Council of the Empire made it impossible to carry out any comprehensive scheme. The only tangible result of some importance was the passing of the law of June 15, 1912, for the reorganisation of local courts.

This statute put an end to the confusion between administrative and judicial functions which

characterised the rule of the land-captains as initiated in 1889. The office of justices of the peace, which had been abolished by that law everywhere except a few cities, was revived with the view of substituting a *régime* of legality for the arbitrary awards of administrative officers: the justices are elected by the district assemblies on the basis of rather high property qualifications, varying from 3000 to 15,000 Rb. in capital value. Suits for minor sums between peasants and cases concerning succession and agrarian disputes, as well as petty criminal jurisdiction in regard to this class of citizens, were reserved to peculiar volost courts held by elective peasant judges and administering local customs recognised by the judges. Thus the peasantry was still kept isolated from other classes, and the idea of a unit of local self-government independent of class distinction was defeated for a time. Even in this curtailed form the Act of 1912 was a step in advance, but its introduction in the different provinces is not a rapid process; it has been delayed in a number of governments by the present war.

Although the terrible struggle of the world war hampers in many respects the peaceful evolution of the nation, it has given rise to such a display of energy and patriotism on the part of self-governing

bodies that it is bound to exercise a beneficial influence all along the line. Russian society in its counties and towns is passing, as it were, the test of a most severe examination, and the results achieved could not be more brilliant. No one will have the right henceforth to speak contemptuously of the lack of initiative or the inability of the Russians to manage corporate interests. Innumerable workers drawn from all groups of society have given their time and strength without stint or bargain to the common cause ; they have continued their efforts under tremendous pressure for months and months ; they have solved difficult problems set before them without any warning, and somehow their capacities for action have proved as elastic as the tasks themselves. Misfortunes and reverses, instead of discouraging them, have spurred them on to ever-increasing efforts. Whatever the future may bring, every Russian has the right to look with pride and hope on the gigantic work achieved by the country in this time of trial. Let us notice some particulars of this national achievement.

The first scenes of the drama were enacted in Moscow—in the historical centre and heart of the country. On July 31, on the news of mobilisation, the town council was convened for an

extraordinary meeting in order, as the chairman put it, that "Moscow should utter its word about events." The leader of the progressive party, N. Astroff, gave voice to the general feeling in an eloquent speech. "Fate has decreed," he said, "that our generation should be responsible for the future of the country, for its integrity, its power and its majesty. Confronted by the historical event, of the tragic conflict of nations, we all, however different our opinions may be as to home politics, express our unanimous indignation against those who dare break the peace, who are guilty of bringing on this misery, this catastrophe, this crime against humanity and civilisation. We are profoundly and firmly conscious of our duty in regard to the past and to the future of the country, and we shall fulfil to the end what we have to fulfil. We shall close our ranks, we shall renounce the strife which encourages our enemies, and we shall defend our native land like one man." He moved that Moscow should tender its service to the Army and Fleet by taking care of the wounded and sick, that one million Rb. should be voted at once to meet the first requirements of the work, and that a committee of the town council should be formed in order to co-operate with the executive board for carrying out all the necessary measures. The motion

was carried unanimously, and the joint committee appointed under it resolved, at its first meeting on August 1, to inform all the municipalities of the Empire of its action and to invite their co-operation. The Zemstvo of the province of Moscow made a similar move and two congresses were called without delay—one of representatives of the Zemstvos on August 12, and the other of representatives of the towns on August 21. The result of these meetings was the creation, with the sanction of the Government, of two Unions—the All-Russian Zemstvo Union, with Prince G. Lvoff as president, and the All-Russian Union of Municipalities, of which M. Chelnokoff, Mayor of Moscow, became eventually President. The duplication of the Unions corresponds to the difference in the social grouping of the people in Russia, the squires and peasants in the provinces keeping rather apart from the merchants, factory owners and artisans of the towns. At the same time it has to be noted that the two Unions have acted together on the present occasion with the most complete concord. The scope of their operations was originally restricted to the organisation of hospitals, the transport of sick and wounded, and the provision of medical help and material equipment; but, as we shall see, their activity was gradually extended beyond these limits.

In the beginning of the war it was thought that the Unions would confine their efforts to the management of base hospitals in the inner provinces of the Empire, while the Army Medical Staff and the Red Cross would serve the needs of the battlefields and of the war zone to which the portion of the Empire, roughly speaking west of Minsk, was assigned. The enormous number of casualties overruled these calculations, and the Unions were drawn by necessity into work within the war zone. This raised an important question of finance. The Zemstvo Union disposed of 12 millions Rb. from rates and voluntary contributions. This sum would have enabled it to keep up only some 25,000 to 30,000 beds and to run a couple of hospital trains. As a matter of fact, the number of patients to be tended rapidly rose to hundreds of thousands. It became clear that the Unions, while presenting the best means for organising social help, would have to carry out functions which fell primarily to the duty of the State and which could not be borne financially without assistance from the State. Up to March 1 the Zemstvo Union received accordingly subsidies from the Treasury to the amount of 44 millions Rb. (about £4,000,000).

The cost of fitting out a bed to serve surgical cases was reckoned at 100 Rb., while the upkeep

of one wounded was made out to be on the average 32·4 Rb. per month.

The plan for the evacuation of the wounded by the Unions was based on a general estimate made by the Army Staff; the probable figure of wounded to be transferred and located per month had been put at 200,000. The flow of these wounded was to be received at five distribution centres—at Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Kursk and Kharkoff—and directed thence towards the base hospitals of five districts consisting of provinces radiating from the five centres. It was calculated that a wounded soldier would remain on an average ten days in the centre hospitals and three weeks in the district hospitals, from which he would be sent on to some convalescent home or minor hospital for the treatment of light cases. The actual flow of wounded which passed through the hospitals served by the self-governing organisations, amounted to about 60,000 by September 1, to 120,000 by October 1, 150,000 by November 1, 154,000 by December 1, 164,000 by January 1, and 170,000 by February 1. Two more distribution centres were added to the original scheme—Ekaterinoslav and Rostoff on the Don, in connection with the campaign against Turkey. Moscow had to assume the lion's share of the work, 60% of the whole number of the wounded passing

through its various hospitals in the earlier stage of the war. The relative importance of the different centres is reflected in the number of sanitary trains assigned to them by the Zemstvo Union. In December, 31 trains ran from and to Moscow, 12 from Petrograd, 9 from Orel, 3 from Kursk and 7 from Kharkoff. It has to be noticed in this connection that the Zemstvo of Kursk, famous as a stronghold of reactionaries—the "Uroxen," as they were nicknamed—was the only provincial Zemstvo which refused to join the Union and preferred negotiating directly with the Army authorities; the result was that the Kursk province, though not Kursk town, proved an inconvenient block in the general system of evacuation. A most important item of the organisation of the Zemstvo Union was the formation of stores for the provision of linen, wadding, warm clothing, etc. Up to February 1 there had been provided, for instance, 7,500,000 pieces of linen, 10,000,000 pieces of warm clothing, etc.; altogether, the cash turnover of the stores amounted for the six months under consideration to 20 millions Rb. received and 20 millions Rb. spent. A great quantity of materials from the stores, especially in the shape of warm clothing, were delivered to Army units in the field in view of pressing needs which could not be

promptly met by the regular commissariat; such deliveries assumed great proportions in the months of December and January, and are represented by half a million Rb. on the accounts of the Zemstvo Union for these two months.

The efficient management by the Union of the task of providing the hospitals and stores of the organisation with materials and manufactured goods attracted the attention of the Army Commissariat and induced it to place large orders for the preparation of linen and clothes for the Army with the Union. Such orders began in October, 1914, and soon reached gigantic figures. 7,500,000 complete outfits of linen were prepared by the Zemstvos in two months, by means of workshops for the cutting of pieces, and of distribution stores, in which the cut pieces were handed out to women workers for sewing and collected on the completion of work. In Moscow 35,000 women, chiefly belonging to families of soldiers at the front, are taking work in this way. It may be of interest to note that a full outfit (shirt and trousers) of linen is paid for by the Commissariat at the rate of 24 kopecks (6d.). The costs of the material to the Union is 6·78 kop., the labour 15·5 kop., the cutting 1 kop., the remaining 0·72 represents sundry small expenses—transport, accounting, etc. The enor-

mous work of distribution and collection is performed mainly by poor law guardians and by co-operative associations. The aim is to get rid as much as possible of sweating, and the success of the Union in this respect has been a striking one. Through its co-operation with the Commissariat it has been able to revolutionise the labour market in more than one branch of industry. A striking instance of the effect of substituting the social organisation for profit-seeking middlemen is afforded by the orders for tailor-made goods. The Commissariat forwarded to the Union large orders for breeches and jackets, partly for the Serbian Army. The Union placed these orders as much as possible in the hands of artels (co-operative societies) of the tailoring trade in the Moscow province,—with excellent results. The piece wage for making a pair of breeches, for instance, rose from 13 kop. to 19 kop., the making of a military tunic of a rather elaborate pattern costs 1 Rb. 20 kop. instead of 80 kop., and the like. A similar organising activity was developed by the Union in connection with the provision of surgical instruments and of drugs.

A wide field of work was open for services connecting the base hospitals and stores with the armies in the field. The Union took over a number of hospital trains, provided them with the necessary

personnel of medical men, nurses and bearers, and equipped them with medicaments and food. On February 1 the Union had forty-four sanitary trains of this kind in its charge. A special feature of the system was the formation of advanced columns for action in the immediate neighbourhood of the fighting lines. A full column, as constituted towards the beginning of the current year after a good many tentative experiments, consists of some three or four motors for rapid transport of the medical personnel, of sixty horse carriages with 150–180 horses, campaign kitchens and baths. Its outfit costs about 100,000 Rb. and its upkeep about 20,000 Rb. per month. It can serve a sector of some 12–15 miles in width for the purpose of carrying wounded to the hospitals, picking up exhausted men, providing food and some rest for tired men, etc. After arriving on the scene of operations it generally deploys into three "flying" detachments which keep in touch with each other and may eventually reassemble. By February the Union had nineteen columns of this kind at its disposal.

It would be impossible to describe in the same detail the work achieved on parallel lines by the Union of Municipalities. It may be sufficient to state that it was in no way inferior to that of the Zemstvo Union in point of organisation or efficiency.

The budget of expenditure calculated to be covered to a large extent by help of State subsidies amounted to some 35,000,000 Rb.

In order to get a more concrete view of the efforts of a leading city in the cause of the war the best thing to do is to review the activity of Moscow, the ancient capital and the real centre of Russia. This can be done on the strength of a statement presented by the Mayor, M. Chelnokoff, to the Tsar during a visit of the latter towards the close of 1914. There were, by December 1, 66,646 fully equipped beds in the city, of which 2062 belonged to hospitals under the patronage of Empress Alexandra, of the Imperial family, of the Red Cross, and of the community of SS. Maria and Martha, 682 beds in hospitals of the Zemstvo Union, 4639 equipped by the Stock Exchange and the Merchant Guild, 9053 by private subscription, 14,853 by the city with contributions from private donors, 23,533 entirely by the city, and 11,824 by the medical department of the Army. For the accommodation of the wounded there were 1314 hospitals and hospital wards. The staff of the city hospitals consisted of 206 supervising guardians, 1354 doctors, 3442 trained nurses, and 4128 probationers, second-class nurses, bearers, etc. Apart from these there was a staff of 1599 attached to the distribution

centres. From the beginning of the war up to December 1, 239,682 sick and wounded of the Russian Army had passed the Moscow distribution centres, as well as 31,103 prisoners. In the Moscow city hospitals there had been in the course of that period 96,735 sick and wounded, of whom 427 had died, 43,658 had left under the supervision of military authorities, and 52,540 were under treatment. On November 28 there were actually occupied in the Moscow hospitals 55,140 beds, and only 1540 were vacant. Thereupon the city decided to equip 12,000 beds more, in order to meet further requirements. For the treatment of infectious diseases 10,000 beds are available. The work of carrying and transporting the wounded from the trains to their various destinations was managed by a voluntary guild of 1300 men, consisting of students of the high schools, civil officials, artists, etc. Convalescents leaving the hospitals are provided with warm clothing and linen, the soldiers of regiments formerly stationed in Moscow have received Christmas gifts. The families of soldiers called up for service from Moscow are receiving separation allowance in addition to that granted by the State (1 Rb. 40 kop. per month in addition to the State allowance of 3 Rb. 60 kop. per grown-up person). Besides, 1,205,656 Rb., making about 10 Rb. a month

per family, have been expended in assisting families whose household economy had been grievously affected by the calling up of their bread-winners. With the help of the boards of guardians and co-operative societies the city distributes a great amount of labour among the families of soldiers called to the colours: 1,200,000 pieces of linen are distributed by this method every month. The boards of guardians and 450 assistants who have volunteered for this service supervise the distribution of money and goods to fugitives from districts occupied by the enemy.[1] Besides, Moscow city has voted large donations to help the devastated districts of Poland and Serbia. Altogether the city has spent, in the course of the first four months of the war, 8 millions Rb. on various objects connected with the war.

We have not the means of following the further development of the activity of Russian self-governing units and unions with the same wealth of details and documentary completeness. But we must characterise briefly the stages reached in the course of the second half-year: they are momentous and full of promise. Towards the middle of February a

[1] This applies to the first months of the war. This item has been enormously increased in consequence of the evacuation of Poland.

second congress of representatives of the municipalities of the Empire took place in Moscow. Apart from reviewing the work achieved in the field of hospital assistance, distribution of labour, help to fugitives, etc., it discussed the general situation of the towns as affected by the war. Circulars had been addressed to the various towns inviting them to state their needs and observations in connection with sanitary and economic matters; a good many municipalities sent in very instructive replies, which were summarised for the use of the Congress. In presenting the report, N. Astroff laid stress on the necessity of a wider and more energetic treatment of social and economic problems by the town authorities, the Union of Municipalities, and the State. "The war that has convulsed the world," he said, "has strained to the utmost the intellectual, economic and material forces of Russia: it leads to great changes in the internal life of the country. Processes of internal change are not effected by leaps and bounds. But the march of extraordinary events makes changes inevitable, and there are no forces capable of staying these changes." Two crying needs were brought home with especial urgency—the need of extensive measures of sanitation and the necessity of concerted and drastic action to organise traffic and to stem the inordinate

rise in prices of commodities. Unless measures of sanitary reform were carried out on a wide scale, there would be imminent danger of the spread of infectious diseases. To mention one point: towns in which cavalry units had been formed were littered with refuse from the horses, and yet, not to speak of sewerage which existed only in 17 towns out of 996, a great number of municipalities were deficient even in ordinary barrels for sanitary transport! Water supply was also far from sufficient and its use was not properly organised. One of the main reasons for such a state of affairs was to be sought in the inadequate budget of the towns. As for the rise in prices, it was due not only to the enormous requirements of the Army and to the dislocation of traffic created by the demands made by the Army Administration on the railways, but also to the haphazard treatment of trade and intercourse. The *moral* of the report, as well as of a memorandum presented by the Petrograd delegation, was the urgent necessity of introducing fresh elements and fresh energy into the management of national affairs, the removal of friction between bureaucratic authorities and self-governing units, the mobilisation of the forces of self-government for the solution of problems arising on all sides. Undoubtedly the weight of the rebuke as regards

the unsanitary condition of the towns, fell primarily on the inertia and low cultural standard of municipal authorities. But they could plead as their excuse the starved state of municipal finances, conditioned by deficiencies in the organisation of the towns on a restricted franchise, and by the pressure of State requirements and supervision. The conduct of the Union and of the leading cities during the war had amply shown in any case that there was plenty of patriotic spirit in the centres of town life, and many workers capable of tackling the most arduous problems with zeal and efficiency, provided the best men were sought out and not driven away by police obstruction and class prejudices.

The reports and speeches of the February Congress, though significant enough, did not lead to any immediate results. The crisis produced by the concentration of Austro-Germanic forces on the Russian front during May and the following months imparted a new impetus to the march of events.

The retreat in Galicia and Poland called forth a heightened consciousness of the national danger and a great manifestation of patriotic resolve. Towards the end of May, at a congress of representatives of trade and industry, the discussion of technical questions was interrupted by an im-

passioned speech delivered by one of the leading Moscow millionaires, V. Riabushinsky, just back from the front and full of the impressions of the life and death struggle against the invaders. "The whole of Russia forms the rear of the Army," he said. "We cannot busy ourselves with our everyday affairs at the present moment: every workshop, every factory must be used to break the enemy's force." It was not a question of forming this or that committee, but of sinking all differences and appealing to the assistance of every able man, without distinction of parties, as people had done in the West—in France and in England. Prince Lvoff spoke in the same strain on June 5 (18) at a meeting of delegates of the Zemstvo Union. "At this great historical juncture," he said, "what is needed is not criticism, but energetic work. We do not want to produce irritation, but a bold spirit and combined efforts. We must strive to concentrate all the forces of the land and to inspire Government and society with mutual confidence." This was the direction recommended by progressive leaders. The Government ought to have recognised the necessity of such a league long before, but, in any case, the crisis opened the eyes even of the blind. As Riabushinsky had said, it was not so much the creation of committees for the joint

management of munitions and supplies that mattered, nor one or the other change in the Cabinet, but the recognition of the fact that the Government is powerless without the country, and that with the support of the country it is invincible.

It is a pity that mutual confidence between Government and Society does not exist, but I think it will be found that Russian intellectuals will continue their efforts in the direction of self-government with the same stubborn resolve which has been shown by the Russian armies in the field. And whatever mishaps may be in store for Russia as a result of vacillation and obstruction, the trend of history is sufficiently clear, and will not be arrested by intrigues and party strife. Let us look back for a moment at the stages of the process. It started with the state of siege in Old Muscovy. The calling in of Western skill in military and economic matters opened the way for humanitarian ideals. In the light of these ideals local and provincial self-government arose on a narrow class basis but with a tendency to democratic expansion. The great emergencies of national life called forth a concentration of local efforts for political ends. These concerted efforts reveal an active and patriotic society ready and anxious to contribute its share to the regeneration of the political system.

THE RUSSIAN PROBLEM. By Professor PAUL VINOGRADOFF, F.B.A., Corpus Professor of Jurisprudence in the University of Oxford. Demy 8vo. Paper, 1s. net; Cloth, 2s. net.

"Professor Vinogradoff contrives to put Russian development in its right perspective and to show us the long movement tending through many an ebb and flow from a world of autocrats and serfs to a vast commonwealth based on a free peasantry."
Manchester Guardian.

DAY BY DAY WITH THE RUSSIAN ARMY, 1914–15. By BERNARD PARES, Professor of Russian History in the University of Liverpool. Official British Observer with the Russian Armies in the Field. Demy 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

EPIC SONGS OF RUSSIA. By ISABEL FLORENCE HAPGOOD. New Edition. With an Introduction by J. W. MACKAIL, M.A., LL.D., formerly Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d. net.

Translations of the most important epic poems in Russian literature.

CONSTABLE'S RUSSIAN LIBRARY

Under the Editorship of STEPHEN GRAHAM.

THE SWEET-SCENTED NAME. By FEDOR SOLOGUB. With an Introduction by STEPHEN GRAHAM. Ex. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d. net.

"It seems to me the greatest literary treasure of its kind that has appeared during the present year."—Robert Lynd in *The Daily News.*

WAR AND CHRISTIANITY. Three Conversations by VLADIMIR SOLOVYOF. With an Introduction by STEPHEN GRAHAM. Ex. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d. net. *Second Impression.*

"The translation of a book like this is a real contribution to Anglo-Russian intimacy."—*Observer.*

*** OTHER VOLUMES IN PREPARATION.

CONSTABLE & CO. Ltd. 10 Orange Street W.C.

STORAGE LIBRARY
DATE DUE
344-6-5

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

352.047
V771s